Department of Political and Social Sciences

The Post-communist Tripartition 1990-2005. Contrasting Actor-centred and Structural Explanations

Jørgen Møller

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to obtaining the degree of
Doctor of Political and Social Sciences of the European University Institute

Florence (September 2007)

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Introduction. The Puzzle of the Post-communist Tripartition

When communism broke down, two conflicting voices were heard within the study of regime change. From one corner of the ring the optimists predicted the coming of a glorious democratic future. Francis Fukuyama's (1992) thesis on *The End of History and the Last Man* captured most headlines. Fukuyama's argument was both lucid and complex, emphasising the *longue durée* only. His claim was that a Hegelian 'struggle of recognition' was pushing the countries of the world towards liberal democracy in an almost teleological manner. However, Fukuyama's assertion was quickly translated into a short-term notion about the inexorable advent of democratic regime change.

Also, the optimism was not confined to the deliberately provoking view of his proselytes. The then so very influential school of Transitology may at heart have had low expectations concerning the spread of democracy (see in particular O'Donnell and Schmitter, 1986) but it also stressed that in the heat of the transition from authoritarianism it was only the actors' choices that were of vital importance; what Larry Diamond (1999 : 193) subsequently termed '[…] the thesis of the causal primacy of political factors'. This short-term actor perspective led many to adopt a comforting long-term message that 'when it comes to democracy, anyone can do it'.[1]

Staunchly opposed to this view, the pessimists argued that the past of these countries, and the communist legacy in particular, more or less ruled out a steady movement toward liberal democracy. Most famous, perhaps, was Samuel P. Huntington's (1996) thesis on *The Clash of Civilisations* which claimed that a fundamental gap separated at least half of the former communist countries from the West – and, by extension, from democracy. But others went even further than that. Witness Ken Jowitt's (1992) warning that 'the Leninist Legacy' had nothing but misery to offer its freed slaves. To quote one of his (1992: 300) many trenchant phrases:

> 'Allow me to continue with my 'catholic heresy' and suggest that in this setting it will be demagogues, priests, and colonels more than democrats and capitalists who will shape Eastern Europe's general institutional identity. Most of the Eastern Europe of the future is

[1] I have borrowed both this observation and this formulation from Carothers (2002 : 8). For an important early contribution which expressed such optimism with regard to Eastern Europe, see Di Palma (1993).

likely to resemble the Latin America of the recent past more than the Western Europe of the present'.

Jowitt was not alone in striking these tones. Adam Przeworski (1991), too, hinted that the East was more likely to copy the South than to join rank with the West, and Claus Offe maintained that the social atomisation bequeathed by communism provided barren soil for the democratic seeds.[2]

Valerie Bunce (1999 : 758) has captured this dichotomy elegantly:

'Thus, there were those whose scenario for postsocialism was gloomy, with images of disarray, despair, and despots as the 'civilizations' of liberalism and state socialism clashed with one another. The picture that emerged in other investigations was a rosy one, however. Here, the argument was either that certain elements of the socialist past were helpful to a liberal outcome, or that the socialist past, while illiberal, had been decisively defeated. In either event, the premise, if not the promise, was that eastern Europe was well positioned to become precisely that: the eastern half of Europe'.

Throughout the first one-and-a-half decades of post-communism, reality conformed to neither of these views, however. Rather, it placed itself squarely between them. First, the setting came to exhibit a fairly systematic partition between democracies and autocracies; the former cluster situated on the western fringes of the old empire, the latter cluster mostly inhabiting the south-eastern territories. Second, quite a number of post-communist states – very conveniently situated between the two other clusters geographically – drifted toward a third alternative. Seemingly caught between democracy and autocracy, these 'hybrid regimes' proved to have a lot of intrinsic stability with respect to their general 'hybrid

[2] Quoting Offe (1991: 881): 'To summarize the propositions that I have discussed so far: A market economy is set in motion only under predemocratic conditions. In order to promote it, democratic rights must be held back in order to allow for a healthy dose of original accumulation. Only a developed market economy produces the social structural conditions for a stable democracy and makes it possible to form compromises within the framework of what is perceived a positive-sum game. But the introduction of a market economy in the postsocialist societies is a 'political' project, which has prospects of success only if it rests on a strong democratic legitimation. And it is possible that the majority of the population finds neither democracy nor a market economy a desirable perspective. If all of those propositions hold true at the same time, then we are faced with a Pandora's box full of paradoxes, in the face of which every 'theory' – or, for that matter, rational strategy – of the transition must fail'.

regime-ness'. Rather than closing rank with either their democratic or their autocratic counterparts, they came to be caught midstream, at least for a while.

In other words, less than a decade[3] after the upheaval of 1989-1991 the post-communist edifice was strikingly similar to the global one with regard to the basic distinction between political regime forms. To quote Valerie Bunce (1999 : 760) yet again:

> 'The postsocialist experience, therefore, exhibits considerable economic and political diversity. Indeed, once a cohesive area representing an alternative world order, this region has become – and very quickly – a microcosm of the larger world within which it resides'.[4]

In fact, we can go further than that. As Herbert Kitschelt (2003: 49) has noted, '[m]easured in terms of civic and political rights indexes developed by the Freedom House, there is no region or set of countries on earth with a currently larger diversity of political regimes […]'.

In this dissertation I set out to account for the combination of synchronic and diachronic variation in post-communist political regime forms, i.e., I deliberately construe time and space as dimensions of variation. The objective is to expound both the political pathways of post-communism and the cross-case divisions at different points in time along these paths. I will open right after the genesis of 1989-1991 but my aim is to trace the political developments into the present.

The period in question, the early 1990s till 2005, was the one in which the respective scenarios of doom or deliverance were expected to unfold. Also, this fifteen years stretch did indeed see significant political developments although neither the scenario of the pessimists nor that of the optimists seized the day. Thus, from a common political point of departure – that of autocracy – in the late 1980s, the post-communist countries went their separate ways. Anticipating the empirical findings of chapter 1 and 2, a tripartition or trichotomy between democracies, hybrid regimes, and autocracies quickly became the reality.[5]

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[3] As Kitschelt (2003 : 49) has emphasised, the post-communist political pathways were established very quickly: 'This postcommunist diversity came about in the short window of about three years (1990-93). Since that time, new regime structures have been more or less 'locked in' in almost all polities'.

[4] Notice that this assertion to some extent goes against Bunce's earlier warning against letting concepts and identified mechanisms travel across separate global regions and time periods. See Valerie Bunce (1995).

[5] On this, see Bunce (1999: 761) where she takes not of the tripartition, albeit with respect to a combined politico-economic dimension.

This combination of cross-temporal and cross-spatial variation is interesting in its own right – and it very much invites a comparative analysis (cf. Bartolini, 1993). My first puzzle can thus be expressed in terms of three particular questions which, by zooming in on the described outcomes on the dependent variable, spell out the general problem of this dissertation:

1) *Which factors account for the presence or absence of democracies in the post-communist setting since the upheavals of 1989-1991?*
2) *Which factors account for the presence or absence of hybrid regimes in the post-communist setting since the upheavals of 1989-1991?*
3) *Which factors account for the presence or absence of autocracies in the post-communist setting since the upheavals of 1989-1991?*

Yet there is more to it than this. I am especially keen on explaining the fact that the variation in political regime forms that has locked in across the setting since the 1990s has been so very systematically dispersed from a geographical point of view. To reiterate and elaborate a point made above, no Central and Eastern European[6] country has failed to reach the promised land of democracy since the breakdown of communism. Conversely, no Central Asian country has succeeded in withstanding the pull of autocracy. Finally, most of the remaining countries have (for the better part of the period) lingered in a hybrid state. This brings me to my second puzzle:

Which factors account for the systematic combination of intra-subregional similarities and inter-subregional differences in post-communist political regime forms that has locked in since the early-1990s?

'Intra-subregional' here denotes familiar subregional clusters such as Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and the central parts of the former Soviet Union, respectively. 'Inter-subregional' refers to the distinction between these clusters.

[6] Throughout this dissertation, I use the term 'Central and Eastern Europe' to denote the areas comprised by the three regions of the Baltic States, East-Central Europe and the Eastern Balkans (viz., Bulgaria and Romania), i.e., the post-communist countries which – with the exception of the Baltic States – were not part of the Soviet Union or the Western Balkans.

When speculating about the origins of these dividing lines, the tentative conclusion that comes to mind is a simple one: the political pathways are so strikingly similar within the three clusters of post-communist countries mentioned above that it questions the causal importance of actors, at least in the longer term.[7] To phrase it differently, it seems obvious that the point of departure of these three groups – the factors that tied each cluster together and set the three clusters apart on the eve of the transition – carry explanatory weight. Furthermore, it is remarkable how the actors, with a few notable and very interesting exceptions, have not been able to break what almost seem to equal a 'geographical iron law of political change'.[8] Both the optimists and the pessimist seemingly brushed over these inter-subregional differences during and in the immediate aftermath of the upheavals of 1989-1991[9].

It is possible to instil this tentative analytical point with methodological content by revisiting Herbert Kitschelt's earlier mentioned paper on post-communism from 2003. Herein, Kitschelt (2003: 74-75) makes a distinction between deeper, structural factors (such as diversity of communist regimes, predicated on variation among precommunist interwar regimes) and shallower, proximate factors (such as the outcome of founding elections, or the power of presidencies in postcommunist constitutions). His methodological point is that the proximate, i.e., actor-centred or institutional explanations, are often too closely linked with the outcome temporally to be causally interesting – at least *vis-à-vis* their 'deeper' counterparts. He makes a convincing case for this, one that seemingly justifies opting for a structural investigation solely.

Furthermore, it is tempting to do so for the simple reason that the proximate explanations have dominated the study of regime change at least since the mid-1980s. It used to be very different. Upon its birth after the Second World War, the democratisation literature was

[7] If a process of diffusion is found to explain the tripartition, actor-choices can still be said to have brought it about as actors carry out diffusion. But then these choices are not important in their own right (i.e., they are not 'voluntaristic') – they are only a consequence of diffusion. Which is basically the same argument as that used by adherents of structural approaches, only with diffusion substituted for structures as the 'root cause'. I will come back to the diffusion argument in chapter 5.

[8] My formulation. Of course, as there are indeed exceptions to the tripartite distribution – we will see this later – it is not a genuine 'iron law.' I merely use this phrase to convey the fact that the geographical dividing lines, or regularities, are very salient.

[9] To paraphrase the quotation from Jowitt above, both the optimists and the pessimists viewed the setting through 'catholic' glasses: stressing the 'sameness', or at least similarity, of the post-communist world rather than its diversity.

deliberately cast in a structural guise. Most notable were the two very different, but equally influential, studies of Seymor Martin Lipset (1959a) and Barrington Moore (1991 [1966]). Lipset pointed to the overriding importance of structural preconditions of democratisation, in his case the economic level of development or, more generally, 'modernisation'. Barrington Moore emphasised the historical paths that brought about the respective outcomes of democracy and autocracy in the world of yesterday, thus tracing the present into the past. Whereas Lipset inaugurated the so-called 'functional school', Barrington Moore sparked off the manifold attempts to explain democratisation from the viewpoint of 'historical sociology'.

Early criticisms of these approaches were aired by Dankwart Rustow in 1970 and Juan J. Linz in 1978. However, it was not until the mid-1980s that the pendulum really swung with the publication of Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter's (1986) path-breaking comments on *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule*. O'Donnell and Schmitter found that countries with very diverse starting points were able to reach the same outcome: democracy – which spoke against the fixation on the structural point of departure. Also termed 'Transitology', this proximate strand within the literature stresses the uncertainty prevailing in the transition phase; a state of flux in which actors make choices about institutions. Focus is, in other words, placed on the importance of institutions emanating from the political choices of actors, especially political elites, during periods of radical change. In this guise, Transitology has dominated the field well into the 1990s.

Presently, a reaction against these actor-centred explanations of regime change seems to be gaining momentum (see, e.g., Rueschemeyer, Stephens and Stephens, 1992, Doorenspleet, 2001, Acemoglu and Robinson, 2006, Skaaning, 2006). Two possible arguments both of which – either directly or indirectly – touches upon the often-used distinction between transition and consolidation can be said to underpin this reaction. The first argument holds that whereas the actors may be very important during the transition, the same cannot be said during the consolidation where the structural factors will inexorably come into their own (e.g., Acemoglu and Robinson, 2006 : 77).[10] The second, and competing, argument promoted by adherents of structural approaches posits that the actor-centred choices occurring during the transitions are (to a large extent) endogenous to the structural constraints – and that the

[10] This is the version which is most congenial to Transitology. I will come back to this in the first sections of chapter 4.

causal chain, i.e., the combination of structural antecedents and proximate choices, then extends to the political effects.

The causal consequences of two arguments thus differ substantially. The corollary of the former position is that the actor-centred factors are most important during the transitions whereas the structural factors mould the longer terms prospects. The corollary of the latter position is, *au contraire*, that the actor-centred factors mirror the structural factors during the transition but that '[a]s time elapses […] the independent causal efficacy of institutions and new political-economic relations is likely to assert itself' (Kitschelt, Mansfeldova, Markowski and Toka, 1999 : 60). I will keep these two competing arguments in mind throughout this dissertation, and come down with a position of my own after the empirical analysis.

Other than that, I do not intend to use the distinction between transition and consolidation (on this distinction, see in particular O'Donnell and Schmitter, 1986 and Linz and Stepan, 1996). Regarding the genus of democracies, my focus is on the institutionalised (aka. self-reproducing) species, i.e., what may – pending the conceptual discussion of chapter 1 and 2 – be termed 'democracy proper'. This instance of democracy obviously has much in common with the logic of consolidation but I do not see the value added by using this concept which, by now, carries a lot of (conflicting) conceptual baggage of its own[11].

But this is by the way. What is important for our purposes is, to reiterate, that it seems meaningful to bandwagon the reaction against the actor-centred explanations from the outset of this study. Yet looks may, as is well know, be deceiving. It would be unfair to rule out the value of the proximate currents before having engaged in any empirical tests. Rather than choosing the narrow structural focus only, I will try to contrast the two approaches in order to examine i) how each of them bear upon the outcome on the dependent variable of post-communist political regime forms and ii) how they bear upon each other in the post-communist setting. In doing so, I will keep in mind Kitschelt's points about the potential shallowness of proximate factors. But the ultimate test must, to reiterate, be an empirical one.

[11] Also, if it is to be meaningful the notion of 'consolidation' seems to me to require that we construe democracy as a coherent system, in which all the systemic properties – as bounded wholes (cf. Sartori, 1987; Collier & Adcock, 1999) – must be present. However, as I will argue (implicitly in chapter 2 and explicitly in chapter 6, appendix 1), such a demanding criterion imperils the empirical value of the construction in that it creates a very diverse (and therefore unhelpful) residual category of 'non-democracies' (i.e., countries which are either not democracies or at least not consolidated democracies).

Is it wise to zoom in on the post-communist setting only? The mid-1990s saw a trenchant methodological debate on the fruitfulness of carrying out interregional comparisons, in particular of comparing the 'East', i.e., the post-communist countries, with the 'South', i.e., either the Southern European or Latin American countries. This debate was centred around the opposing views of, on the one hand, Philippe Schmitter and Terry Karl (1994) and, on the other, Valerie Bunce (1995).

Schmitter and Karl's message was a simple one: only by comparing very different regions is it possible to establish the presence of regional idiosyncrasies (or the lack thereof). Bunce's reaction to this plea for conceptual travels was to point out that the post-communist region is so unique that it makes much more sense to contrast the countries of this setting with each other, in particular because it contains the optimal combination of similarities and differences for engaging in comparative endeavours.

Methodologically, Schmitter and Karl have the upper hand in this debate, at least according to my view. Uniqueness should be established through empirical comparisons – *a posteriori* – not assumed *a priori*. Conceptual stretching is less of a problem than Bunce makes it out to be since it can be remedied by a zealous use of the ladder of abstraction, i.e., by opting for more general concepts when travelling (cf. Sartori, 1970).

In all events, it does not make much sense to construe the post-communist setting as a 'region' if this term denotes the presence of a relatively homogenous cluster. As already noted – and in spite of what seemed a common politico-economic point of departure in 1989-1991 – the former communist bloc is today more heterogeneous with respect to political outcomes than any other, globally. Hence, when comparing the post-communist countries which each other, one may in fact do what Schmitter and Karl recommends: contrast intra- and inter-(sub)regional similarities and differences. This is what I aim to do in the present dissertation, and this is why I will i) stick to the post-communist setting but ii) include as much of the setting as possible.

Regarding the latter point, one further question must be tackled straight away: Which countries to choose? Obviously, it would be preferable to zoom in on the entire population, i.e., to pick all 28 post-communist countries (not counting newly independent Montenegro). I have, however, chosen to exclude the ex-Yugoslavian cluster with the sole exception of Slovenia. The reason is a twofold. First, torn by pernicious internecine strife, the foursome of Croatia, Serbia-Montenegro, Bosnia and (albeit to a lesser extent) Macedonia has followed a very unflattering political path throughout most of the period that interests me here for reasons that are not necessarily linked to general factors of political change. The causal

mechanisms at work in this corner of post-communism are likely to be very idiosyncratic (cf., e.g., Kopstein and Reilly, 2000 : 25), so to say, and I am on the stakeout for more general mechanisms. Second, and more pragmatically, but also importantly, it has proven very hard to get reliable data on in particular Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia-Montenegro with respect to the indicators that interest me. That leaves us with a set of 24 countries, ranging from the Czech Republic in the West to Mongolia in the East.

A few words on the structure of the dissertation might seem appropriate at this point. In the subsequent two chapters – part I of the dissertation – I will conceptualise, operationalise and order the empirical referents on the dependent variable, bearing the stated problem in mind. In doing so, I will also test a descriptive argument that is quite popular these days: that an increasing global gap between the electoral and the liberal property of modern or liberal democracy has come into existence since the early 1990s.

Part II, which is made up of the chapters 3 to 5, represents the bulk of the dissertation for this is where I engage the explanans. In the first two of these chapters I analyse the causal merits of actor-centred and structural explanations of post-communist political diversity, respectively. On the basis of these analyses, I contrast the two approaches in chapter 5 – and add a discussion of yet a third alternative explanation: diffusion.

Part III can be construed as an elaboration and a robustness-test of part II. Chapter 6 represents a move to a lower level of abstraction. Analysing the surprising instances of political change known as the 'colour revolutions', my objective is to check whether the structural constraints have loosened, in turn paving the way for actor-induces changes on the dependent variable. In chapter 7, I attempt to substantiate the legacies-approach to post-communism that underpins the structural explanations. Finally, in the conclusion I revisit the findings and discuss the strengths and limitations of the analysis. This also entails some considerations concerning further research.

Enough said – let us get into the ring.

Part I: Unfolding the Tripartition

Chapter 1. The Gap Between Electoral and Liberal Democracy Revisited. Some Conceptual and Empirical Clarifications[12]

The general objective of this chapter is to provide a useful conceptualisation of the dependent variable of political regime forms. To be more particular, the aim is to arrive at a conceptual and operational edifice that sets dissimilar post-communist countries apart while bringing similar post-communist countries together – with regard to the explanandum.

Reinventing the wheel is seldom advisable and the proper point of departure is the existing literature on democracy or, more generally, on political regime forms. This subject has received quite a lot of attention within the study of regime change during the latest decades. Most notably, a number of scholars have promoted an interesting claim: that it is necessary to make a conceptual and empirical distinction between the electoral and the liberal face of democracy.

The distillation of democracy into an electoral and a liberal component primarily builds on inductive arguments. For these formerly Siamese twins are seemingly, so the claim goes,[13] being torn apart under the auspices of what Samuel P. Huntington (1991) has termed the 'third wave of democratization'. If this is indeed the case, then we do need to embed the electoral *vis-à-vis* liberal distinction into the conceptualisation of the political regime form. Otherwise, we cannot appreciate the dominant empirical dynamics of political change taking place in the world of today. So, let us start out by elucidating and testing this claim.

1. Considerations about the gap between electoral and liberal democracy

Almost a decade ago Larry Diamond published *Developing Democracy*. In this book, he carefully developed a distinction between electoral and liberal democracy and then went on to demonstrate that most of the recent instances of democratisation belong in the electoral category – separated by a significant gap from their liberal betters. To quote from his (1999 : 10) account, '[…] the gap between electoral and liberal democracy has grown markedly

[12] This chapter is a longer version of Møller (2007a). For an earlier – and much less developed – version, see Møller (2006a).

[13] Needless to say, other scholars have emphasised distinct dynamics – and properties – with regard to the present processes of democratisation. On this conceptual diversity, see Collier and Levitsky (1997). However, what is important for our discussion is that a number of influential scholars – e.g., Diamond (1999) and Zakaria (1997, 2003) – have concluded that such a gap is salient, globally.

during the latter part of the third wave, forming one of its most significant but little-noticed features'.

Diamond has not been alone in staking this claim. Guillermo O'Donnell's notion of 'delegative democracy' is very much based on the existence of such a gap, albeit with a narrower empirical context in mind, viz. Latin America. To quote from his (1992 : 7) original working paper on this new concept, '[d]elegative democracy […] is more democratic, but less liberal, than representative democracy'. In his later writings, this assertion has been elaborated further. In an attempt to direct attention to the intimate relationship between the state and democracy, O'Donnell (1993 : 11-12) thus writes that '[…] in many areas the *democratic*, participatory rights of polyarchy are respected. But the *liberal* component of democracy is systematically violated'.

Fareed Zakaria has been even more outspoken. In a recent book with the telling title *The Future of Freedom. Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad*, he argues that electoral (termed 'illiberal' by Zakaria) and liberal democracy have more or less parted ways in the world of today. Quoting one of his (2003 : 17) trenchant passages: 'Over the last half-century in the West, democracy and liberty have merged. But today the two strands of liberal democracy, interwoven in the Western political fabric, are coming apart across the globe. Democracy is flourishing; liberty is not'.

A strong theoretical argument does in fact favour spelling out the merits of modern democracy with reference to both an electoral and a liberal element. As we shall see, the two dimensions cover distinct aspects of modern democracy. In other words, both regimes that combine the presence of the electoral component with the absence of the liberal equivalent and vice-versa are conceptually meaningful. Also, the distinction aptly captures the lineage of democracy. The electoral element dates back to ancient Greece; witness the literal meaning of the Greek word 'democracy' as *rule by the people*. The liberal element neatly covers the much more recent Anglo-Saxon addition, emphasizing – at the very least – the constitutional qualifications of freedom rights and the rule of law, *rule for the people* that is. If a significant gap is separating the two, then it is indeed an important observation.

Be that as it may, the assertions about electoral and liberal democracy of Diamond, O'Donnell and Zakaria are tied together not by common theoretical premises but by inductive reasoning. When looking at the world, they simply identify a gap between the two constructs. This inductive emphasis is no mere coincidence. At the end of the day, the justification for separating the twin components must be empirical. If we do not obfuscate the dynamics of regime change in the present world by collapsing the two dimensions, then there

is no reason to separate them since this only increases the conceptual complexity. More technically, if we can translate 'thicker' concepts into 'thinner' concepts without notable validity problems, parsimony dictates that we should do so (cf. Gerring, 1999).

This is the test then: whether the conceptual separation assists us in capturing the empirical variation – the most salient dividing lines – on, first, the global level and, second, with regard to the post-communist subset. Diamond's account of the gap is the most ambitious in the literature, theoretically as well as empirically. Hence, I will stick to him throughout this chapter (for a discussion of Zakaria's work, see appendix 5).

Diamond's actual conceptualisation is, however, less convincing than his point of departure. He goes on to develop a fourfold 'typology' of political regime forms, as illustrated below.

Figure 1: Diamond's original typology of political regime forms[14]

Liberal Democracy	Electoral Democracy	Pseudo-Democracy	Non-Democracy

As the one-dimensionality of the figure indicates, Diamond's edifice is not what we would normally term a typology. Rather, it is a classification or at the very most a matter of 'quasi-types' (cf. Lazarsfeld & Barton, 1951).[15] And so what, one may feel inclined to ask? The consequent conceptual problem is, however, a very tangible one. A pure classification only covers one dimension; it is an ordering – based on mutually exclusive classes – that refers to one attribute only. In other words, Diamond has drawn a line with 'very democratic' in one end, 'very undemocratic' in the other end, and placed four types along this line.[16]

In doing so, Diamond is unable to carry his distinction between the electoral and the liberal dimension of liberal democracy over into his actual conceptualisation of political regime forms. In his typology, the two dimensions are not conceptually independent of each other. Rather, they are covered by one and the same attribute. Hence, a country moves from 'electoral democracy' to 'liberal democracy' not by adding liberal merits only but by either i)

[14] Adapted from Diamond (1999).

[15] In their seminal article on classifications and typologies, Lazarsfeld and Barton (1951 : 172) employs this terminology to denote '[…] 'types' which are the result of serial operations on one attribute', i.e., what is normally referred to as classes. Genuine types '[…] refer to special compounds of attributes'.

[16] This is also indicated by Diamond's use of 'midrange conceptions', i.e., regime forms situated between the respective 'types' of electoral and liberal democracy. See Diamond (1999 : 13).

doing somewhat better with regard to both the electoral and the liberal criteria or ii) doing much better with regard to any of the two (see appendix 2 for an illustration). In other words, the two 'quasi-types' or 'classes' are separated by a difference in degree, not a difference in kind. This is also obvious when reading Diamond's subsequent scoring of selected countries, an issue I will return to. Taken together, Diamond's conceptualisation simply cannot appreciate his own distinction between the electoral and liberal components of liberal democracy.

To be fair, Diamond has changed his conceptual scheme somewhat since the publication of *Developing Democracy* (see Diamond, 2002 and Diamond, 2003). First, he has proposed to operate with one dimension only, namely the electoral one. Second, he has rebuilt his typology. Third, he has changed the thresholds between the quasi-types or classes. The third point, the modification of thresholds, is only a technicality albeit a very pertinent one – which I myself will mention and adhere to later on. But let us discuss the two first corrections in turn. Starting with the former point, sticking to the electoral dimension definitely presents a way to circumvent the logical (or taxonomic) problems identified above. In this manner, it is possible to rely on a purely electoral classification, i.e., it is possible to classify countries independently of the liberal dimension, thus abandoning the very notion of two components. Doing so means that we cannot capture any gap, though, and this strategy is not very congenial to the agenda he has himself staked out.

This is probably why Diamond does not stop here – and this brings us to the second point. Immediately after classifying countries on the electoral dimension only, he (2003 : 8) reintroduces the notion of conceiving '[…] of democracy in terms of two thresholds'. The first one is that of electoral democracy; that '[…] principal positions of political power are filled through regular, free, fair, and competitive (and, therefore, multiparty) elections'. The second one is that of liberal democracy, viz.:

> 'Beyond the electoral arena, it features a vigorous rule of law, with an independent and non-discriminatory judiciary; extensive individual freedoms of belief, speech, publication, association, assembly, and so on; strong protections for the rights of ethnic, cultural, religious, and other minorities; a pluralistic civil society, which affords citizens multiple channels outside the electoral arena through which to participate and express their interests and values; and civilian control over the military' (2003 : 9).

The two dimensions are back in, and – as illustrated in figure 2 – Diamond's consequent new typology of political regime forms is merely an elaboration of his former edifice; which is illustrated by the fact that the countries once again move from the 'electoral' to the 'liberal' quasi-types not exclusively by adding liberal merits but by doing better on both of the two dimensions. Also, the connotations of the latter four constructs ('Ambiguous Regimes'; 'Competitive Authoritarian'; 'Electoral, Uncompetitive Authoritarian'; and 'Politically Closed Authoritarian') do not as such carry any semantic reference to a logical distinction between the two attributes.

Figure 2: Diamond's elaborated typology of political regime forms[17]

Liberal Democracy	Electoral Democracy	Ambiguous Regimes	Competitive Authoritarian	Electoral, Uncompetitive Authoritarian	Politically Closed Authoritarian

In a nutshell, the logical problem of identifying two relevant theoretical dimensions and then building an ordering that refers to one attribute only remains. In this chapter, I will seek to remedy that problem by creating a conceptualisation that does indeed capture those two dimensions. To be more precise, I will build up an ordering of 'attribute compounds', i.e., a genuine typology (cf. Lazarsfeld and Barton, 1951). Throughout these endeavours, I build on Diamond's 'theoretical' argumentation about the two dimensions of liberal democracy – it is the taxonomic exercise that I intent to adjust. However, as will be demonstrated, this has significant consequences for the actual scoring of the cases and, by extension, for the conclusions about the direction of the current of the third wave of democratisation. Let us start out at the proper point – by discussing the very technique of conceptualisation.

2. Conceptualisation – why and how?

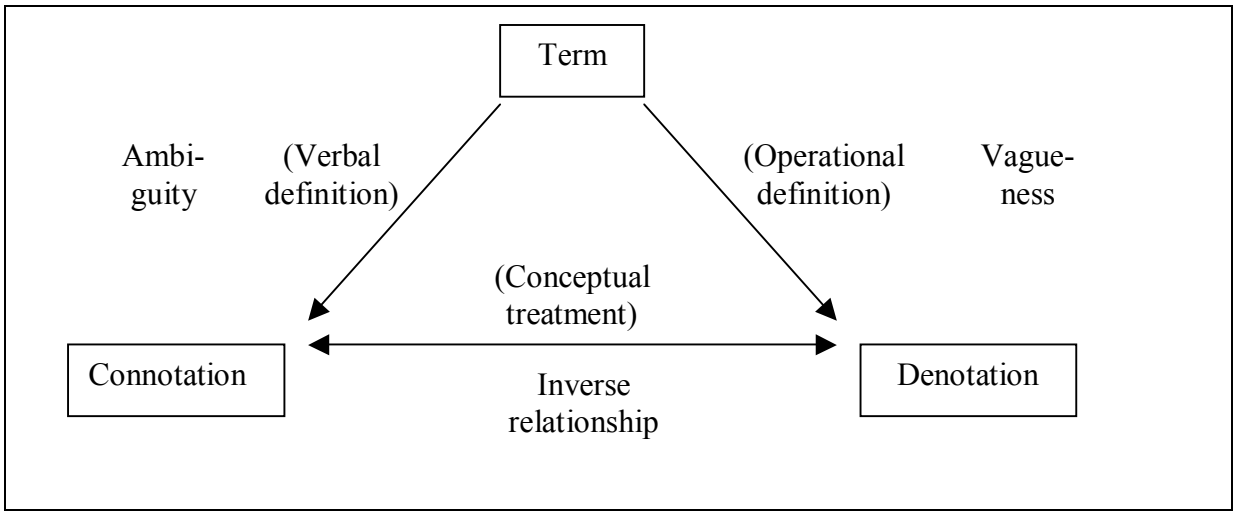
'In a very crucial sense there is no methodology without logos, without thinking about thinking'. Thus asserts Giovanni Sartori (1970 : 1033) in his seminal article on conceptualisation, published in 1970. Sartori's point is straightforward: before we can even think about measurement – in order to validate or falsify a given causal claim – we must solve the logical problems of conceptualisation. Quoting John Gerring (1999 : 357-358):

[17] Adapted from Diamond (2002) and Diamond (2003).

‘’Concept formation’ conventionally refers to three aspects of a concept: (a) the events or phenomena to be defined (the extension, denotation, or definiendum), (b) the properties or attributes that define them (the intension, connotation, definiens, or definition), and (c) a label covering both *a* and *b* (the term)’.

These three aspects are illustrated in figure 3.

Figure 3: The aspects of concept formation[18]



Few voices of dissent exist on the subject of why to conceptualise. However, the opinions differ when it comes to the ‘how to?-question. Sartori champions a very rigorous approach. His (1970 : 1041) focal point is the so-called ‘ladder of abstraction’: ‘We make a concept more abstract and more general by lessening its properties or attributes. Conversely, a concept is specified by the addition (or unfolding) of qualifications, i.e., by augmenting its attributes or properties’. To solve the corresponding problems, Sartori proposes ten demanding rules for concept formation.

Sartori has subsequently been criticised for his uncompromising attitude to the rigour of concept formation. Gerring (1999) has pointed out that the relevance of a concept hinges on the particular research project. This is so because concept formation is an uncertain process, riven by choices, or trade-offs, to use his term. Gerring proposes a ‘criterial’ corrective, i.e., he directs attention to the many different (and often mutually conflicting) criteria that must be observed. Concept formation is, in his opinion, a struggle between eight competing *desiderata*, these being familiarity, resonance, parsimony, coherence, differentiation, depth,

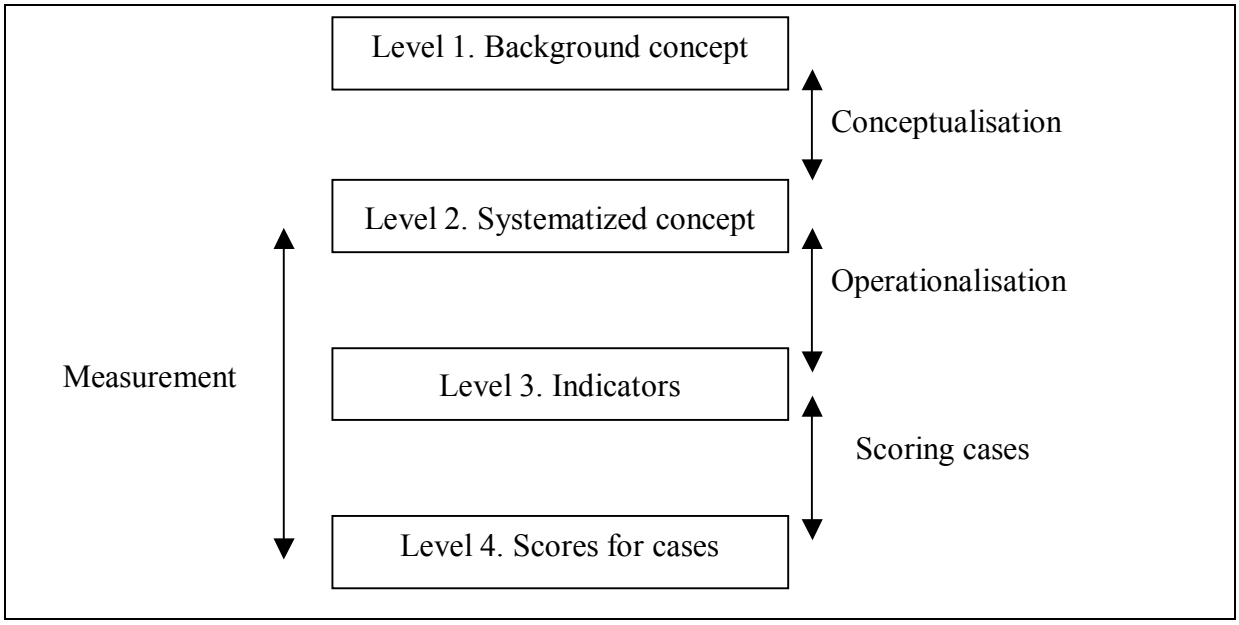
[18] This is the so-called Ogden-Richards Triangle.

theoretical utility and field utility. To quote him (1999 : 367), '[c]oncept formation is a fraught exercise – a set of choices which may have no single 'best' solution, but rather a range of more-or-less acceptable alternatives'.

That is, it is pretentious – and flawed – to seek to provide the ultimate clarification, valid through space and time, of a given concept. Instead, Gerring advocates, the scholar should reveal all his interim considerations and thus ensure that the process of concept formation is transparent. To paraphrase, the validity of the definitions depends in the last instance on whether it is possible to understand the researcher's goals and the way these are produced.

Gerring's criticism of Sartori's scheme makes sense. But this does not mean that Sartori's 'ladder of abstraction' – or 'model of layered concept formation' as it has also been termed – is not useful. It is only his affiliated rules that are unnecessarily demanding. Hence, I opt for his model with certain qualifications. What does this mean for the following conceptual exercise? First, the notion of the ladder of abstraction will act as a pivot whereas Sartori's various rules will not be observed in any systematic way. Second, I will keep in mind Gerring's emphasis on the intimate link between the definition and the actual field of research, *in casu* the third wave of democratisation in general and the post-communist experience in particular. Sartori distinguishes between three levels of abstraction: the high level, the medium level and the low level. Subsequently, Robert Adcock and David Collier (2001) have elaborated on this ladder, dividing it into four levels as illustrated in figure 4.

Figure 4: Levels of conceptualisation and measurement[19]



[19] Figure adapted from Adcock and Collier (2001).

Adcock and Collier's objective is to safeguard 'measurement validity' when moving from the concepts to the reality on the ground. To quote: 'Valid measurement is achieved when scores (including the results of qualitative classification) meaningfully capture the ideas contained in the corresponding concept' (2001 : 530). I find this augmenting of the ladder – and especially the consequent embedding of the distinction between conceptualisation, operationalisation, and scoring of the cases directly into the differing levels of abstraction – very useful because it allows us to separate conceptual issues from validity issues.

The most abstract, or general as Adcock and Collier prefer to term it, level is that of the background concept. This is a playground where little disagreement exists because the concept carries almost nothing with regard to negation, i.e., what it is not.[20] Descending the ladder to the next rung, we move to the level of the systematized concept. Here, the researcher is compelled to take a stand, to clearly specify what the connotations of the concept are not capturing. Taking another step, we reach the levels of the indicators, the operationalisation of the concept that is. At this point, we must declare the denotations of the concept before finally presenting a way to measure it.

3. Conceptualising democracy

Defining democracy from scratch would be a bold quest but it would also be a foolish one. A plethora of competing definitions already exists within the literature, definitions that are impossible to escape as a theoretical frame of reference. In the subsequent pages, I will descend the ladder of abstraction sketched earlier, in turn elucidating the dominant definitions of democracy found within the literature. Starting with the most modest connotation, I will discuss the advantages of moving (or not moving) towards 'thicker' definitions. In doing so, I will – as already indicated – very much walk down the same aisle as Larry Diamond did in *Developing Democracy*. But I feel that it is necessary to elucidate this path to avoid any confusion about the subsequent empirical analysis.

[20] 'Almost nothing' relative to the lower levels of the ladder only, however. Following Sartori (1970 : 1042) even at the most abstract level there must be a contrary to the concept. To quote: ' The crucial distinction would thus be between 1) concepts defined by negation or *ex adverso*, i.e., by saying what they are *not*, and 2) concepts *without negation*, i.e., no-opposite concepts, conceptions without specified termination or boundaries. The logical principle involved in this distinction is *omnis determinatio est negatio*, that is, any determination involves a negation. According to this principle the former concepts are, no matter how broad, *determinate*; whereas the latter are indeterminate, literally *without termination*'.

3.1 The background concept

Tackling the level of the background concept should not cause much confusion.[21] Little disagreement exists with regard to this the most abstract definition of democracy. Quoting Diamond (1999 : 8):

> 'By and large, most scholarly and policy uses of the term *democracy* today refer to a purely political conception of the term, and the intellectual shift back to an earlier convention has greatly facilitated progress in studying the dynamics of democracy, including the relationship between political democracy and various social and economic conditions'.

Defining democracy as a *political regime form* is in line with the tradition reaching back to Joseph A. Schumpeter – what I perceive to be the most promising understanding given the empirical setting under scrutiny. In *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, originally published during the Second World War, Schumpeter (1974 [1943] : 242) famously wrote that,

> '[d]emocracy is a political *method*, that is to say, a certain type of institutional arrangement for arriving at political – legislative and administrative – decisions and hence incapable of being an end in itself, irrespective of what decisions it will produce under given historical conditions. And this must be the starting point of any attempt at defining it'.

I find this point of departure very appealing. Even on the most abstract level such a definition paves the way for assessing the importance of socio-economic factors as independent variables of democracy; something that is obviously not possible when these are included directly into the dependent variable (cf. also Adcock and Collier, 2001 : 533). Hence, I will simply stick to this understanding of democracy on the most general level.[22] We still have a

[21] Which is not surprising. Witness Adcock and Collier (2001 : 533) general assertion that '[…] the systematized concept, rather than the background concept, should be the focus in measurement validation'.

[22] What I am in effect doing, then, is to disregard the more 'substantive' (i.e., thicker) definitions also found within the literature – see e.g. Held (1987) and Przeworski et al (1995). What is interesting about these definitions – which may be better construed as discussions – is that they are virtually never used when seeking

long way to travel conceptually, though. At the present stage, our problem is the very tangible one that democracy, whatever it may be, is logically only one status (or outcome) on the variable of the political regime form. In order to capture the dependent variable, we need to spell out what democracy, as a political regime form, *is and is not*[23] in detail, also as regards the connotative definition. This forces us to move to the level of the systematized concept.

3.2 The systematized concept

Schumpeter (1974 [1943] : 269) went on to define democracy as '[…] that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for people's vote', the free competition for the free vote, that is. Elections have often been the cardinal point in definitions of democracy (e.g., Huntington, 1991 and Przeworski, Alvarez, Cheibub and Limongi, 1996); Schumpeter's is merely the most influential of these. The electoral current within the theoretical literature simply argues that free contestation for political leadership is what, at the end of the day, separates democracies from autocracies.

Viewing democracy as a pure electoral engine may facilitate empirical endeavours yet it is not unproblematic in the world of today. To quote Diamond (1999 : 9), '[…] such formulations may still fail to give due weight to political repression and marginalization, which exclude significant segments of the population – typically the poor or ethnic and regional minorities – from exercising their democratic rights'.

Recall that the connotation, i.e., the intension, of a definition is inversely related to the denotation, i.e., the extension. To translate Diamond's objection into this language, with such a modest (purely electoral) intension, the extension covers a very large cluster of countries that have very little in common. Hence, it makes sense to expand the connotation of the concept of democracy. Before doing so, one thing should be made clear. It is possible to maintain Schumpeter's 'realistic' vein of thinking, i.e., to keep his interpretation of democracy as a method, while expanding the connotation of the concept. Like pearls on a

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to 'measure' democracy across a large number of units. Rather, authors – e.g., Sørensen (1998) – mention and sometimes even recommend the substantive definitions in the conceptual discussion and then opt for either a Schumpeterian or a Dahlian operationalisation when attacking the empirical world. And with good reason; for it is – as argued in this chapter – not easy to travel with the heavy and multi-faceted baggage of the substantial definitions.

[23] I have borrowed this formulation from Schmitter and Karl (1993).

string, we thus keep the *one* necklace yet add new content to it (using Collier and Levitsky's, 1997 terminology we 'precise the definition'). This is obviously only possible for so long, however, since, at some point, we will in fact be toying with another kind of pearls; and hence a different necklace. This cut-off point should not go unnoticed.

The most influential elaboration of the Schumpeterian definition dates back to 1971 – revisited in 1989 – when Robert A. Dahl conceived his concept of *Polyarchy*, crafted as an empirical approximation of the ideal notion of democracy. To quote him (1989 : 220),

> '[p]olyarchy is a political order distinguished at the most general level by two broad characteristics: Citizenship is extended to a relatively high proportion of adults and the rights of citizenship include the opportunity to oppose and vote out the highest officials in the government'.

To spell out this combination of participation and contestation, Dahl augments the definition into seven criteria; any political regime form capable of fulfilling these earning the status of polyarchy. The former four criteria can be construed as capturing the electoral component of democracy whereas the latter three capture the liberal equivalent.[24]

Figure 5: The Dahlian model[25]

1. Elected officials.	Control over government decisions about policy is constitutionally vested in elected officials.
2. Free and fair elections.	Elected officials are chosen in the frequent and fairly conducted elections in which coercion is comparatively uncommon.
3. Inclusive suffrage.	Practically all adults have the right to vote in the election of officials.
4. Right to run for office.	Practically all adults have the right to run for elective offices in the government, though age limits may be higher for holding office than for the suffrage.

[24] In fact, it is a bit more complicated than this. Dahl does not seek to capture the two components as independent entities. Rather, his point seems to be that the liberal freedoms are necessary conditions of fair elections, they stand in a causal relationship so to say – as also emphasised by O'Donnell (2001). I will come back to this issue in the first sections of chapter 2.

[25] Adapted from Dahl (1989 : 220-221).

5. Freedom of expression.	Citizens have a right to express themselves without the danger of severe punishment on political matters broadly defined, including criticism of officials, the government, the regime, the socio-economic order, and the prevailing ideology.
6. Alternative information.	Citizens have a right to seek out alternative sources of information. Moreover, alternative sources of information exist and are protected by laws.
7. Associa-tional autonomy.	To achieve their various rights, including those listed above, citizens also have a right to form relatively independent associations or organizations, including independent political parties and interest groups.

Dahl's conceptual edifice has many merits, adding liberal components to the electoral ones as it does. However, it also suffers from some of the same problems as its Schumpeterian predecessor. Dahl, too, emphasises the procedural aspects in themselves while neglecting the capacity to uphold these procedures. To be fair, he (1989 : 221) asserts that:

> 'It is important to understand that these statements characterize actual and not merely nominal rights, institutions, and processes. In fact, the countries of the world may be assigned approximate rankings according to the extent to which each of the institutions is present in a realistic sense'.

However, Dahl does not include this requirement directly into his list of criteria – it remains a background condition, hence leaving it to the empirical investigation. If this were in itself sufficient, he might just as well have defined polyarchy as a regime form where both contestation and participation (and hence the affiliated electoral and liberal rights) are a fact of life, without spelling it out into seven requirements or sub-components. Once again we encounter a need to augment the connotation. What we need at this point is some thorough theorising about the state and democracy. Or, to be more precise, about constitutional liberalism. As Diamond (1999 : 11-12) rightly tells us:

> 'Freedom and pluralism, in turn, can be secured only through a 'rule of law', in which legal rules are applied fairly, consistently, and predictably across equivalent cases,

> irrespective of the class, status, or power of those subject to the rules […] This in turn requires a legal and judicial system and, more broadly, a state with some capacity. Thus Juan Linz's dictum: 'no state, no *Rechtsstaat*, no democracy''.

Before we proceed any further, it is interesting to hark back to Schumpeter's original definition for a moment. One of his main points stands in stark contrast to the one about to be made here. 'We have seen that the democratic method does not necessarily guarantee a greater amount of individual freedom than another political method would permit in similar circumstances', he (1974 [1943] : 271) points out. To illustrate this, he (1974 [1943] : 243) delivers a quasi-historical example in the footnotes:

> 'In particular it is not true that democracy will always safeguard freedom of conscience better than autocracy. Witness the most famous of all trials. Pilate was, from the standpoint of the Jews, certainly the representative of autocracy. Yet he tried to protect freedom. And he yielded to a democracy'.

This quotation pinpoints the difference between the Schumpeterian definition and that of his successors. Today, while still defining democracy as a political method, it is most often perceived as a method that safeguards certain liberties; as a constitutional aegis against arbitrary and therefore limitless power, including the power of the majority, that is (see also Sartori, 1987 on this point). By implication, mob rule is no more democratic than tyranny. This brings us to the next stop on our theoretical journey: Guillermo O'Donnell.

In 1993, O'Donnell published a working paper titled *On the State, Democratization and Some Conceptual Problems*. His point of departure is an observation very akin to that of Diamond, namely that many 'polyarchies' are not very liberal. On this background, O'Donnell (1993 : 10) invites us to remember the most critical aspect of a genuinely liberal state: the existence of a universalistic legal order, one that '[…] can be successfully invoked by anyone, irrespective of her position in society'. Subsequently, O'Donnell has expanded these thoughts in the article 'Democracy, Law, and Comparative Politics'. Herein, he (2001 : 14) stresses that '[…] the combined effect of the freedoms listed by Dahl and other authors (expression, association, and access to information) cannot fully guarantee that elections will be fair', and thus arrives at the following definition of democracy:

> 'Political democracy has four unique differentiating characteristics in relation to all other political types: (1) fair and institutionalised elections, jointly with some surrounding 'political freedoms'; (2) an inclusive and universalistic wager; (3) a legal system that enacts and backs – at least – the rights included in the definition of a democratic regime; and (4) a legal system that prevents anyone from being *de legibus solutus*. The first two characteristics pertain to the regime, the last two to the state and its legal system' (2001 : 24).

The rule of law, in its classical liberal interpretation, is exactly the criterion that needs to be added to Dahl's concept of polyarchy in order to arrive at a fuller coverage of what is most properly termed 'liberal democracy' (but could just as well be termed 'democracy proper').

Having gone this far, should we proceed further, enriching the connotation even more? A number of oft-cited scholars have in fact done so. In their tour de force through *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*, published in 1996, Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan define consolidated democracy as a political situation in which democracy has become 'the only game in town' – behaviourally, attitudinally and constitutionally. I have so far stopped short of any 'attitudinal requirements'. What is it, more precisely, that Linz and Stepan advertise for? One quotation should suffice to shed light on this:

> 'Attitudinally, democracy becomes the game in town when, even in the face of severe political and economic crises, the overwhelming majority of the people believe that any further political change must emerge from within the parameters of democratic formulas' (1996 : 5).

In the countries that I have set out to analyse, however, this requirement is problematic empirically – and theoretically it is problematic in general. To start with the empirical issue, under post-communism hardships of socio-economic character have been almost ubiquitous (see Møller, 2006b). In such circumstances, one can hardly expect the population to remain sanguine concerning the transition process in general. A lack of faith in democracy may represent nothing more than a general feeling of material loss. Hence, the attitudinal dimension may cover something else than the loyalty to democracy – there may, so to say, be a validity problem in applying it empirically.

As regards the theoretical issue, the attitudinal component is not really complementary to the criteria discussed in the preceding sections. Adding attitudes does not represent an

elaboration of democracy as a method, or as a political regime form; it represents an entirely different theoretical track. As Schumpeter rightly pointed out more than 60 years ago, travelling down this path is not desirable**,** and it is a subject that is today best treated in the so-called Quality of Democracy-discussion (see Diamond and Morlino, 2004). This is not really surprising considering that Linz and Stepan focus on the 'consolidation' of democracy rather than on democracy *per se* when stating this requirement. But my purpose in raising the issue was merely to explain why no 'attitudinal' properties have been deemed relevant for the purpose at hand.

The same objections apply to that distant relative of the attitudinal component, the focus on civil society. The most important contemporary author espousing the 'civil society view' is Robert Putnam (1993, 2000). One sarcastic reference to the Schumpeterian conception of democracy effectively elucidates his (otherwise not very systematically treated) definition of democracy:

> 'That democratic self-government requires an actively engaged citizenry has been a truism for centuries. (Not until the middle of the twentieth century did some political theorists begin to assert that good citizenship requires simply choosing among competing teams of politicians at the ballot box, as one might choose among competing brands of toothpaste)' (2000 : 336).

Once again, the requirement is too elusive empirically and covers a different aspect theoretically. As for the chosen setting, it is hard to imagine that a viable civil society can be established overnight, not least in a situation of socio-economic aridity. Theoretically, what it is important to emphasise is the extent to which the state secures a free space for such organisational activity (and through Dahl and O'Donnell we have already covered that aspect). Again, what matters is the presence of what has been termed *the rule of law* – but might just as well be termed *liberal constitutionalism* – not the extent to which people actually engage in independent organisational activities. And hence we end our little side trip through the theoretical literature.

Where does this excursion leave us? With the theoretical discussion of the preceding sections in mind, I have thus far advocated an understanding of liberal democracy that has two requirements: the first is fulfilled by Schumpeter's electoral criterion, the second by the combination of Dahl's criteria concerning free expression and associational autonomy and O'Donnell's criterion of the presence of a rule of law to uphold these rights.

What logically follows from this is that I have conceptualised the political regime form as having two dimensions: one electoral and one liberal. This is the connotative space that I cover at the level of the systematized concept. Hence, I have arrived at a twofold classification. The first concerns the electoral component of democracy. Here, a country either fulfils the Schumpeterian criterion of free and fair elections for political leadership or it does not. The second concerns the liberal component. Here, a country either fulfils the criterion that the state apparatus is capable of upholding certain liberal rights (Dahl) through a rule of law (O'Donnell) or it does not. When fusing these two categorical classifications, a typology covering the political regime form emerges – as illustrated in figure 6.[26]

Figure 6: A typology of political regime forms

	+ Freedom rights & rule of law	- Freedom rights & rule of law
+ Free & fair elections	Liberal Democracy	Electoral Democracy
- Free & fair elections	Liberal Autocracy	Illiberal Autocracy

Before proceeding, it is necessary to say a few words about the notion of the presence or absence of the 'the rule of law' as a property covering part of the serial operations on one of the two attributes of the 'political regime' attribute compound. Collier and Levitsky (1997 : 445-446) have proposed that O'Donnell is shifting his background, or 'overarching' as they term it, concept of democracy from 'regime' to 'state' when including the rule of law into his definition. As already mentioned, O'Donnell does in fact attribute the legal characteristics to the state. Yet this does not alter the fact that his main point seems to be that the electoral rights will never be effective without the support of the rule of law. In other words, following in O'Donnell's footstep it is possible to retain the Schumpeterian concept of democracy as a 'political regime form' but – as is also done by borrowing from the Dahlian elaboration – add requirements.[27]

[26] This conceptual construction is my own but the exercise as such follows the logic of making classifications and typologies put forward by Lazarsfeld and Barton (1951). See especially the pages 155-165 and 169-180.

[27] Using Collier and Levitsky's (1997) terminology this equals 'precising the definition'.

Thus, I have developed an analytical scheme that exhausts the background concept and spells out the possible variants in a systematic manner. At this point, a few words on the nomenclature seem appropriate.[28] I have chosen to name the four consequent types 'liberal democracy', 'electoral democracy', 'liberal autocracy', and 'illiberal autocracy'. The two polar types (type 1 and type 4) are easily comprehendible as they combine either the presence of both the electoral and the liberal property ('liberal democracy') or the absence of both properties ('illiberal autocracy'). Type 2 and type 3 are more complicated matters. 'Electoral democracy' describes a country in which free elections take place in an illiberal state, i.e., in the absence of freedom rights and the rule of law. This is the species of democracy that Diamond, O'Donnell and Zakaria perceive to be on the increase. 'Liberal autocracy', on the other hand, describes a country characterised by liberal constitutionalism but where free elections do not take place. This type was, with certain qualifications due to the more limited scope of the rights, a salient phenomenon in 19th Century Western Europe. It has been argued that it may re-emerge in the near future (see, e.g., Mair, 2005 on the EU) but, as we will see, in the present world it is a very rare species.

The typology allows us to capture the electoral and the liberal attributes (each of which can be present or absent) as independent dimensions, i.e., the two dimensions can vary separately. For that very reason, it provides a vehicle for assessing whether an empirical gap between the two dimensions is salient and whether it is increasing. To elaborate, such a gap is salient if the empirical referents found in the type of 'liberal democracy' constitute a relatively low proportion of all the countries that have the attribute of 'free and fair elections', i.e., the absolute number of referents found in type 1 ('liberal democracy') and

[28] As the nomenclature shows, I have restricted the term democracy to the types that denote the presence of 'free and fair elections'. This implies two things with regard to the electoral property. First, that 'free and fair elections' are construed as a necessary but not sufficient condition for the existence of democracy proper (i.e., 'liberal democracy'). Second, that 'free and fair elections' are sufficient for the existence of a 'diminished subtype' of democracy (i.e., 'electoral democracy'). The attribute of 'freedom rights and the rule of law' (the liberal property) is also a necessary but not sufficient condition for 'liberal democracy'. However, as the nomenclature shows, it is not a sufficient condition for a diminished subtype of democracy because it would not be meaningful to use the term 'democracy' to denote a country in which 'free and fair elections' do not take place. To sum up, even though the nomenclature does not – and this is both intentional and important – force us to opt for a pure 'electoral' definition of democracy (with the liberal property becoming an adjective only), it does introduce some differential conceptual treatment of the two dimensions. Although regrettable, this is necessary to appreciate the prevailing conceptualisations of democracy and thus to retest them empirically. I am indebted to an anonymous reviewer on *Acta Politica* for suggesting this clarification.

type 2 ('electoral democracy').[29] And the gap is increasing if the number of referents in the type of 'electoral democracy' grows relatively compared with the number of empirical referents in the type of 'liberal democracy'. In what follows, I will use this typological construct to carry out an empirical (re-)assessment of Diamond's analysis.

The last thing remaining on this level is to specify the connotative definitions of the four types, i.e., to exhaust the attribute space of the typology. On the basis of the preceding sections, I propose the following definitions:

1) Liberal democracy is *a political regime form that combines i) the presence of free electoral competition for political leadership with ii) the presence of a liberal state upholding certain liberal rights through the rule of law.*
2) Electoral democracy is *a political regime form that combines i) the presence of free electoral competition for political leadership with ii) the absence of a liberal state upholding certain liberal rights through the rule of law.*
3) Liberal autocracy is *a political regime form that combines i) the absence of free electoral competition for political leadership with ii) the presence of a liberal state upholding certain liberal rights through the rule of law.*
4) Illiberal autocracy is *a political regime form that combines i) the absence of free electoral competition for political leadership with ii) the absence of a liberal state upholding certain liberal rights through the rule of law.*

3.3 Indicators

We have now reached the denotative side of the conceptual coin, the operational level, that is. Operational definitions – i.e., definitions that by themselves incorporate the identification of the empirical referents – are complicated matters, not least within the study of regime change. I follow Sartori (1984 : 34) in arguing that the social scientist is faced with three, separate operational problems.

1) The border problem (to be settled by denotative definitions)
2) The membership problem (to be settled by precising definitions)
3) The measurability problem (to be settled by operational definitions)

[29] When referring to this quantity (viz., all the countries that have the attribute of 'free and fair elections'), I will simply use the phrase 'all electoral democracies'.

All three problems must, in turn, be tackled.

3.3.1 The border problem

As a first step, I will seek to solve the border problem for each of the four types identified at the level of the systematized concept, and I will do so by employing an elaborated version of Dahl's criteria for polyarchy. Luckily, it is only necessary to recast, expand that is, the denotative definitions with one category, namely the rule of law. Instead of coming up with my own formulation, I will use one of O'Donnell's (2001 : 24) formulations as criterion, i.e., whether '[…] the legal system enacts and backs – at least – the rights included in the definition of a democratic regime and prevents anyone from being *de legibus solutus*'. This criterion can be added to the Dahlian list as demonstrated in figure 7.

Figure 7: The elaborated Dahlian model

1. Elected officials.	Control over government decisions about policy is constitutionally vested in elected officials.
2. Free and fair elections.	Elected officials are chosen in the frequent and fairly conducted elections in which coercion is comparatively uncommon.
3. Inclusive suffrage.	Practically all adults have the right to vote in the election of officials.
4. Right to run for office.	Practically all adults have the right to run for elective offices in the government, though age limits may be higher for holding office than for the suffrage.
5. Freedom of expression.	Citizens have a right to express themselves without the danger of severe punishment on political matters broadly defined, including criticism of officials, the government, the regime, the socio-economic order, and the prevailing ideology.
6. Alternative information.	Citizens have a right to seek out alternative sources of information. Moreover, alternative sources of information exist and are protected by laws.
7. Associational autonomy.	To achieve their various rights, including those listed above, citizens also have a right to form relatively independent associations or organizations, including independent political

	parties and interest groups.
8. The rule of law	The legal system enacts and backs – at least – the rights included in the definition of a democratic regime and prevents anyone from being *de legibus solutus.*

3.3.2 The membership problem

Having solved this problem, I proceed by targeting the membership problem. What is necessary here is to ensure that all countries, or cases, scrutinized will fit logically into the proposed typology; and, by extension, that the types and underlying classes are mutually exclusive. Crossing any conceptual threshold is always an arbitrary and relative matter. What are we to do in the present case?

Sheer common sense tells us that it is only meaningful to classify a country as either having an electoral democracy or a liberal state if the requirements pertaining to this dimension are more fulfilled than they are violated. This brings me to the following precising definitions with respect to the four types:

1) Liberal democracy is *a political regime form where both the former four criteria and the latter four criteria are more fulfilled than violated.*
2) Electoral democracy is *a political regime form where the former four criteria are more fulfilled than violated whereas the latter four criteria are more violated than fulfilled.*
3) Liberal autocracy is *a political regime form where the former four criteria are more violated than fulfilled whereas the latter four criteria are more fulfilled than violated.*
4) Illiberal autocracy is *a political regime form where both the former four and the latter four criteria are more violated than fulfilled.*

3.3.3 The measurability problem

Finally, it is necessary to solve, or at least settle, the measurability problem. What is at stake here is both the validity and the reliability of the scoring. A high validity will only be achieved insofar as it is meaningful to claim that the data employed measure the eight criteria listed above (and, thus, the overarching systematized concept). A high reliability requires that the data employed actually measure what they posit to measure.

The claim that I intend to defend here is that the Freedom House ratings of 'political rights' and 'civil liberties' will serve me better than any available alternative. This assertion sounds somewhat defensive. It does so because using the Freedom House ratings to measure 'democracy' is very much a point of controversy within the democratisation literature (see, in particular, Munck and Verkuilen, 2000).

Concerning the reliability of the data, the ratings are without doubt more reliable than anything I would be able to produce on my own, especially since I need diachronic data. More to the point, regarding the validity the alternative indices of democracy differ more from my definition than that of Freedom House does. To give but one example, the POLITY IV index, which has been hailed as one of the best offers on the marketplace (Munck and Verkuilen, 2000), does not directly touch upon the criteria of the rule of law and civil liberties. To quote from the POLITY IV data users' manual:

> 'Democracy is conceived as three essential, interdependent elements. One is the presence of institutions and procedures through which citizens can express effective preferences about alternative policies and leaders. Second is the existence of institutionalized constraints on the exercise of power by the executive. Third is the guarantee of civil liberties to all citizens in their daily lives and in acts of political participation. *Other aspects of plural democracy, such as the rule of law, systems of checks and balances, freedom of the press, and so on are means to, or specific manifestations of, these general principles. We do not include coded data on civil liberties*' (Marshall and Jaggers, 2002 : 12, my emphasis).

In other words, the issue of the validity of the data favours the Freedom House ratings. This index is divided into questions concerning two dimensions, one covering political rights and one covering civil liberties. To describe this distinction, a quotation from Karatnycky (2003 : 102) – the president of Freedom House – will suffice:

> 'A country grants its citizens political rights when it permits them to form political parties that represent a significant range of voter choice and whose leaders can compete for and be elected to positions of power in government. A country upholds its citizens' civil liberties when it respects and protects their religious, ethnic, economic, linguistic, and other rights, including gender and family rights, personal freedoms, and freedoms of press, belief, and association'.

This separation is well suited for my purposes because it mirrors the distinction between the electoral and the liberal dimension captured by the typology crafted above. In fact, the Freedom House-index is built up around a number of questions that are remarkably alike my 'elaborated Dahlian'-criteria (cf. figure 7). Consequently, the index captures the respective properties emphasised by Schumpeter, Dahl and O'Donnell.

Having said that, on both the electoral and the liberal dimension the Freedom House questions go somewhat beyond these properties. For instance, to measure the attribute of 'political rights', questions whether the government is accountable to the electorate between the elections and whether the government is free from pervasive corruption are included. Likewise, to measure the attribute of 'civil liberties', questions concerning personal autonomy and other more 'private' rights are included (see Freedom House, 2006). None of these properties are relevant for my purposes, and they do of course weaken the validity of using the measure to order the cases within my typology. However, these particular validity-problems do not undermine the general distinction between an electoral and a liberal dimension and I will ignore them in the following analysis.

Using the Freedom House-ratings has one further great advantage: it will allow me to compare my findings with those of Diamond, since he, too, employs these figures. Note that this is in itself a weighty (albeit pragmatic) argument favouring the choice of the Freedom House ratings. Hence, I will let my two dimensions of democracy be covered by the corresponding two dimensions of the Freedom House index. The electoral dimension will be measured using the values for 'political rights'; the liberal dimension will be measured using the values for 'civil liberties'. My precising definitions rested on the conceptual claim that in order to qualify as having 'free and fair elections' and 'freedom rights and the rule of law', respectively, the foursome of criteria pertaining to each of these dimension should be more fulfilled than violated. But what are the consequent thresholds?

The Freedom House ratings assign scores between 1 and 7 on both the electoral and the liberal dimension of democracy. With regard to their own classification of political regime forms, the most important cut-off point is situated at 2.5 (on the average value of 'political rights' and 'civil liberties'). This threshold separates 'free' countries from 'partly free' countries and it is the threshold that Diamond relied on in *Developing Democracy*. It does not appreciate my point about keeping the two dimensions independent of each other, however. The most blatant example of this is that a country that scores 2 on 'political rights' and 3 on 'civil liberties' is termed 'free' whereas one that scores 3 on 'political rights' and 2 on 'civil

liberties' is only termed 'partly free' – one attribute is simply more important than the other in the Freedom House's classification.

I cannot rely upon this scheme as I seek to order on two equally important dimensions that must carry equal weight. Two requirements must thus be observed. First, I must have the same threshold on both attributes. Second, a country must pass each of these thresholds to reach the type of 'liberal democracy'. The question is, however, whether I should choose 3 or 2 as the threshold on each of the dimensions. As touched upon earlier, in his more recent pieces Larry Diamond has changed his threshold. Whereas he relied upon the Freedom House's cut-off point between 'free' and 'partly free' in *Developing Democracy*, he now only lets countries scoring 2 or better on both 'political rights' and 'civil liberties' obtain the predicate of 'liberal democracy'. Diamond's argument is that this is necessary to avoid classifying countries with severe political shortcomings as 'liberal democracies'. He makes a convincing case for this and I will follow in his footsteps on this point (concerning the empirical consequences of using 3 as a threshold, see appendix 3). This brings us to the following operational definitions:[30]

1) Liberal democracy is *a political regime form where both the former four criteria and the latter four criteria carry an average value that equals or is less than 2 when using the values of political rights and civil liberties reported by the Freedom House.*
2) Electoral democracy is *a political regime form where the former four criteria carry an average value that equals or is less than 2 whereas the latter four criteria carry an average value of more than 2 when using the values of political rights and civil liberties reported by the Freedom House.*
3) Liberal autocracy is *a political regime form where the former four criteria carry an average value of more than 2 whereas the latter four criteria carry an average value that equals or is less than 2 when using the values of political rights and civil liberties reported by the Freedom House.*
4) Illiberal autocracy is *a political regime form where both the former four criteria and the latter four criteria carry an average value of more than 2 when using the values of political rights and civil liberties reported by the Freedom House.*

[30] Notice that I only include 'defining properties', i.e., properties that bound the concept extensionally, in my operational definitions throughout this dissertation – accompanying properties are deliberately ignored.

4. A reappraisal of the third wave of democracy

It is time to return to Diamond's empirical observations concerning the gap between electoral and liberal democracy in the 1990s. I will (re-)test his claim in two empirical contexts, viz., the global setting and the post-communist subset, respectively. The first test will clarify the general validity of Diamond's conclusions, the second whether the conclusions are valid for the explanandum of this dissertation.

In doing so, I will solely employ his original analysis – the one from *Developing Democracy* – for two reasons. First, as already argued his elaborated typology basically suffers from the same logical problem of mixing together the two dimensions of democracy. Second, and more pragmatically, his original edifice is that which is easiest to compare with my typology because it contains fewer quasi-types or classes.

4.1 The global setting

4.1.1 A typological comparison

Diamond's empirical claim about the gap is not based on an actual comparison between the two 'quasi-types' of 'liberal democracy' and 'electoral democracy'. Rather, he employs a proxy, namely Freedom House's distinction between 'free states' (liberal democracies) and 'formal democracies' (electoral democracies) (see Freedom House, 2006). Referring to these data, he (1999 : 28) points out that,

> '[a]s a proportion of all the world's democracies, free states declined from 85 percent in 1990 to 65 percent in 1997 […] The proportion inched back up to 69 percent in 1997 (and close to 75 percent in 1998). But it remains to be seen whether this is a harbinger of a new trend of democratic deepening or just oscillation within a new equilibrium'.

The data-series that he refers to are presented in table 1, adapted from his own account.

Table 1: Diamond's account of political regime forms, 1990-1997

Year	Formal Democracies (N, %)	Free States/Liberal Democracies (N, %)	Free States as Percentage of Formal Democracies	Total N

1990	76 (46.1)	65 (39.4)	85.5	165
1991	91 (49.7)	76 (41.5)	83.5	183
1992	99 (53.2)	75 (40.3)	75.8	186
1993	108 (56.8)	72 (37.9)	66.7	190
1994	114 (59.7)	76 (39.8)	66.7	191
1995	117 (61.3)	76 (39.8)	65.0	191
1996	118 (61.8)	79 (41.4)	67.0	191
1997	117 (61.3)	81 (42.4)	69.2	191

Table 1 clearly demonstrates that the gap between 'free states' (i.e., liberal democracies) and 'formal democracies' (i.e., electoral democracies) was widening throughout the 1990s. But what happens when the Freedom House numbers are reanalysed using the four-fold typology conceptualised in this paper? The corresponding figures are depicted in table 2.

Table 2: The alternative account of political regime forms, 1990-1997

Year	Liberal Democracies (N, %)	Electoral Democracies (N, %)	Liberal Autocracies (N, %)	Illiberal Autocracies (N, %)	Liberal Democracies as percentage of all electoral democracies	Total N
1990	51 (30.9)	14 (8.5)	2 (1.2)	98 (59.4)	78.1	165
1991	52 (28.3)	26 (14.1)	1 (0.5)	105 (57.1)	58.1	184
1992	57 (30.6)	19 (10.2)	3 (1.6)	107 (57.5)	75.0	186
1993	57 (30.0)	19 (10.0)	1 (0.5)	113 (59.5)	75.0	190
1994	57 (29.8)	22 (11.5)	2 (1.0)	110 (57.6)	72.2	191
1995	63 (33.0)	18 (9.4)	0 (0.0)	110 (57.6)	77.8	191
1996	64 (33.5)	22 (11.5)	0 (0.0)	105 (55.0)	74.4	191
1997	64 (33.5)	21 (11.0)	0 (0.0)	106 (55.5)	75.3	191

Three trends are worth elucidating. First, at the outset 'liberal democracies' constitute a lower proportion of all electoral democracies – i.e., all countries that have free and fair elections – in my edifice than when relying on Diamond's analysis: 78.1 percent as opposed

to 85.5 percent. But then the relationship is turned upside-down from 1993 onwards. Whereas Diamond's numbers hit a rock bottom of 65 percent in 1995, my numbers only reach 72.2 percent in 1994.

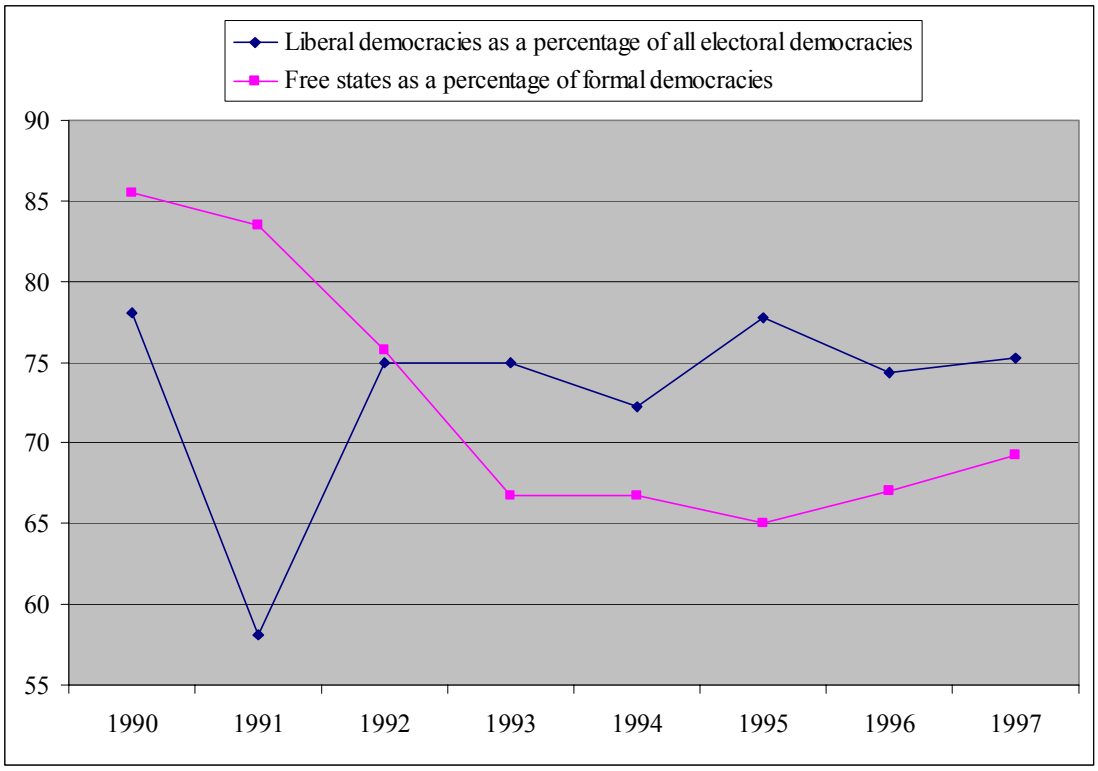
Second, and more importantly, according to my typology there is no increasing gap between the number of referents in the type of 'electoral democracy' and the type of 'liberal democracy' in the period 1990-1997. With the sole exception of 1991 – the ultimate year of political change[31] – liberal democracies as a proportion of all electoral democracies are fixed close to 75 percent throughout the period.

Third, pure 'electoral democracies' are not a very common species. In absolute numbers, the membership of this political regime form only oscillates from a low of 14 in 1990 to a high of 26 in 1991 – and from then on hovers around 20. Related to this, I find some 'liberal autocracies' in most of this the period, ranging from a high of three in 1992 to a low nil in 1995, 1996 and 1997. The scant membership and volatile nature of the 'liberal autocracy' type go to show that this is not a stable political regime form. But neither is 'electoral democracy'. It is in fact very difficult to find stable specimens of either of these two types over the period in question.

What emerges from these differences? When the electoral and the liberal dimensions of liberal democracy are systematically conceptualised as independent of each other, Diamond's increasing gap does not exist. Throughout the period in question, the countries almost always move in the same direction on both the electoral and the liberal dimension. True, there are exceptions to this pattern but exceptions are exactly what they are. Figure 8 depicts the observed misfit between the two empirical appraisals of the gap.

[31] In the post-communist subset alone, this year saw the number of countries rise from 8 to 23. See table 6 below.

Figure 8: Comparing the two analyses of the empirical gap



Diamond did not have the possibility of analysing the subsequent years, i.e., 1998-2005.[32] What happens if we extend the analysis to this period? The consequent distribution between the four types appears.

Table 3: The alternative account of political regime forms, 1998-2005

Year	Liberal Democracies (N, %)	Electoral Democracies (N, %)	Liberal Autocracies (N, %)	Illiberal Autocracies (N, %)	Liberal Democracies as percentage of all electoral democracies	Total N
1998	64 (33.5)	24 (12.6)	1 (0.5)	102 (53.4)	72.7	191
1999	67 (34.9)	19 (9.9)	0 (0.0)	106 (55.2)	77.9	192
2000	69 (35.9)	19 (9.9)	1 (0.5)	103 (53.6)	78.4	192

[32] I stop in 2005 because these are the numbers that were available to me during this analysis. In chapter 7, I touch up on some country-scores for 2006.

2001	66 (34.4)	20 (10.4)	2 (1.0)	104 (54.2)	76.7	192
2002	72 (37.5)	15 (7.8)	3 (1.6)	102 (53.1)	84.7	192
2003	75 (39.1)	11 (5.7)	3 (1.6)	103 (53.6)	87.2	192
2004	76 (39.6)	11 (5.7)	2 (1.0)	103 (53.6)	87.4	192
2005	79 (41.1)	7 (3.6)	3 (1.6)	103 (53.6)	91.9	192

As can be seen, the gap between electoral and liberal democracy has shrunk significantly in the new millennium. Since 2000, 'liberal democracies' as a proportion of all electoral democracies have risen above the former pinnacle of 78.1 percent in 1990, even clearly surpassing it since 2002. Also, and related to this, the number of purely 'electoral democracies' has hit a low of around 10 in the latest years.

The empirical conclusion of the typological exercise is therefore two-fold. First, the orderings on the electoral and the liberal dimension co-vary overwhelmingly (not much of a gap exists) and, second, even the limited differences between the two are not in the increase in the period 1990-2005 (the gap is actually decreasing). In other words, the conclusion is that there is no increasing number of countries in which free elections take place in an illiberal state, neither absolutely nor relatively.

4.1.2 Comparing the orderings on the liberal and electoral attributes directly

To reiterate a fundamental point, the purpose of the typological analysis has been to replicate Diamond's analysis in a way that mirrors his conceptual distinction between the liberal and electoral components of democracy yet changes the taxonomic exercise. However, one could argue that the typological analysis may obfuscate the general picture. Notice, thus, that the two polar types ('liberal democracy' and 'illiberal autocracy') logically embody the core of 'democracy' and 'autocracy', respectively, whereas type 3 ('electoral democracy') and type 4 ('liberal autocracy') are diminished subtypes of 'liberal democracy' (cf. Collier and Levitsky, 1997). The corollary is that the four types are not placed on the same level of generality. Maybe this is why the results differ from Diamond's analysis?

To check this out, it makes sense to do an additional analysis, viz., to compare the orderings on the liberal and the electoral dimension directly, rather than comparing types within the consequent property space. If there is an increasing gap between the two components, then it will come out through such a comparison. To elaborate, I will now compare the number of countries that obtain the electoral property (free and fair elections)

with the number of countries that obtain the liberal property (freedom rights and the rule of law). In doing so I employ the same thresholds as in the previous section, i.e., any country receiving a score of 1 or 2 on 'civil liberties' has the liberal property, and any country receiving a score 1 or 2 on 'political rights' has the electoral property. Do we see an increasing gap between the two corresponding groups in the period analysed by Diamond? The figures are depicted in table 4.

Table 4: Comparing the orderings on the two attributes, 1990-1997

Year	Countries with 'Freedom rights & the rule of law' (N, %)	Countries with 'Free & Fair elections' (N, %)	Countries with 'Freedom rights & the rule of law' as a percentage of countries with 'Free & Fair elections'	Total N
1990	53 (32.1)	65 (39.4)	81.5	165
1991	53 (28.8)	78 (42.4)	67.9	184
1992	60 (32.3)	76 (40.9)	78.9	186
1993	58 (30.5)	76 (40.0)	76.3	190
1994	59 (30.9)	79 (41.4)	74.7	191
1995	63 (33.0)	81 (42.4)	77.8	191
1996	64 (33.5)	86 (45.0)	74.4	191
1997	64 (33.5)	85 (44.5)	75.3	191

Once again, three things are worth noting. First, at any time throughout the period 1990-1997, the countries which have the electoral property outnumber the countries which have liberal property. In gist, a gap between the two components is in existence. Second, however, the gap is not really widening throughout the period. The sole exception is once again the tumultuous years 1990-1991 where the gap did indeed increase significantly, from one-fifth to one-third. Curiously enough, however, Diamond found only a very small increase in this particular year. More to the point, after bouncing back again in 1992, the gap has remained relatively stable – it has merely decreased from 79 percent to 75 percent. Differently said, in the very period where Diamond observed an increasing gap, i.e., from the mid-1990s onwards, not much has happened.

Third, the gap is – again with the exception of the protean year 1991 – smaller than that described by Diamond. From 1992 onwards, the ratio between countries which have the electoral property and countries which have the liberal property are situated around four to three. Diamond's ratio in the same period is almost three to two. In a nutshell, the classificatory analysis confirms the conclusions of the typological analysis. It is hence not surprising that the gap that does in fact exist once again decreases in the period 1998-2005, as illustrated in table 5.

Table 5: Comparing the orderings on the two attributes, 1998-2005

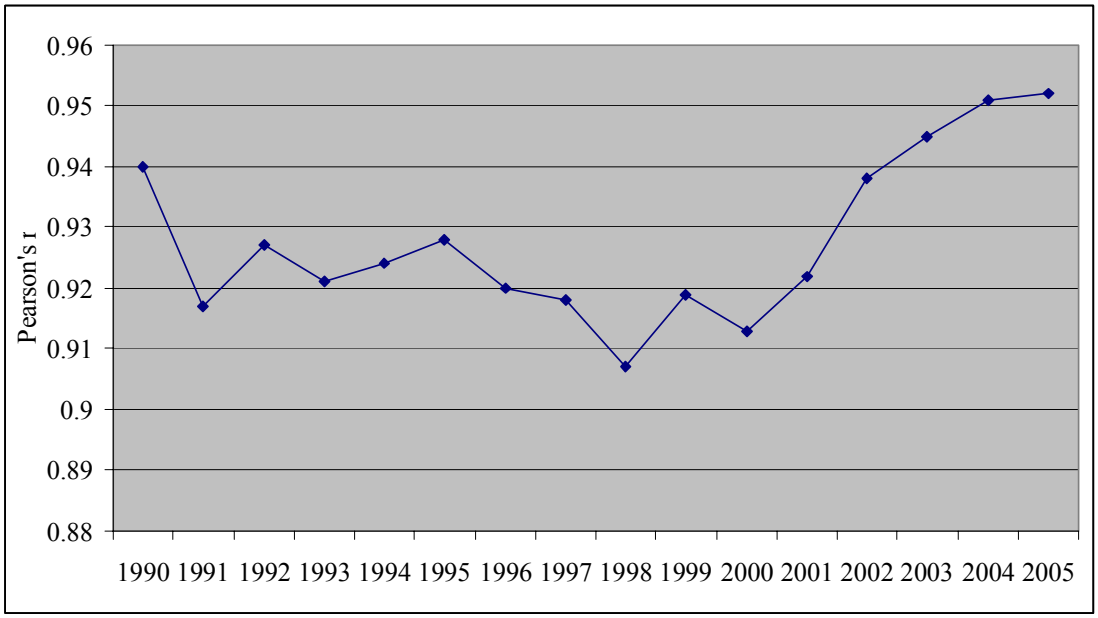
Year	Countries with 'Freedom rights & the rule of law' (N, %)	Countries with 'Free & Fair elections' (N, %)	Countries with 'Freedom rights & the rule of law' as a percentage of countries with 'Free & Fair elections'	Total N
1998	65 (34.0)	88 (46.1)	73.9	191
1999	67 (34.9)	86 (44.8)	77.9	192
2000	70 (36.5)	88 (45.8)	79.5	192
2001	68 (35.4)	86 (44.8)	79.1	192
2002	75 (39.1)	87 (45.3)	86.2	192
2003	78 (40.6)	86 (44.8)	90.7	192
2004	78 (40.6)	87 (45.3)	89.7	192
2005	82 (42.7)	86 (44.8)	95.3	192

One may, finally, object that the crude thresholds used to separate the classes on each of the dimensions could disguise the actual differences between the scores on the liberal and the electoral dimension. After all, none of the previous taxonomic orderings allow us to make any distinction between a country scoring 3 and a country scoring 7 on either of the two dimensions. In both instances, the respective properties are absent.

To appreciate this point, I will retest the empirical conclusions by statistically correlating the respective Freedom House-scores of 'political rights' (the electoral dimension) and 'civil liberties' (the liberal dimension), i.e., by treating the differences on each dimension as differences in degree only. A two-fold conclusion appears (see appendix 4 for the precise

numbers). First, Pearson's R[33] measuring the global relationship between political rights and civil liberties is situated between 0.9 and 0.96 throughout the period in question, viz., 1990-2005. This is a very strong correlation which shows that the scores on the two dimensions normally go hand in hand. Second, there is only a slight drop in the late 1990s, and the highest correlations are found at the end of the period, demonstrating that the relationship is strengthening over time. This is illustrated in figure 9.

Figure 9: The bivariate correlations between 'Political Rights' and 'Civil Liberties', 1990-2005



The statistical investigation thus corroborates the findings of the taxonomic exercises: that the countries almost always travel in the same direction on both of the two dimensions and that this co-variation has increased, not decreased, over time.

4.2 The post-communist setting

One thing needs to be settled before we can dismiss the empirical value of the theoretical distinction between the electoral and liberal dimensions of liberal democracy. The world's a stage, but it is not the stage of this dissertation. The empirical context covered herein is

[33] The Freedom House ratings of 'political rights' and 'civil liberties' are basically an ordinal measurement. Yet within the democratisation literature, there is precedence for treating the scores as being on a ratio scale. Accordingly, I have used Pearson's R rather than gamma to measure the bivariate correlations. Also, and not surprisingly, the gamma-values paint very much the same picture as that depicted in figure 9.

limited to the post-communist countries. And the distinction between the electoral and the liberal component may, of course, capture important dividing lines in the post-communist setting even though it does not do so on the global level.

This must be checked. But to keep this chapter from becoming too tedious, I will solely carry out the typological exercise this time, neglecting the two other tests employed above. In table 6 and table 7 I have repeated the investigation of political regime forms – but this time only in the post-communist quarter. Recall that I deliberately exclude the ex-Yugoslavian cluster with the sole exception of Slovenia. What do the numbers show?

Table 6: The alternative typological account of political regime forms in the post-communist setting, 1990-1997

Year	Liberal Democracies (N, %)	Electoral Democracies (N, %)	Liberal Autocracies (N, %)	Illiberal autocracies (N, %)	Liberal democracies as percentage of all electoral democracies	Total N
1990	3 (37.5)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	5 (62.5)	100.0	8
1991	3 (13.0)	6 (26.1)	0 (0.0)	14 (60.9)	33.3	23
1992	4 (17.4)	2 (8.7)	2 (8.7)	15 (65.2)	66.7	23
1993	5 (20.8)	3 (12.5)	1 (4.2)	15 (62.5)	62.5	24
1994	5 (20.8)	3 (12.5)	2 (8.3)	14 (58.4)	62.5	24
1995	8 (33.3)	2 (8.3)	0 (0.0)	14 (58.4)	80.0	24
1996	7 (29.2)	4 (16.6)	0 (0.0)	13 (54.2)	63.6	24
1997	8 (33.3)	3 (12.5)	0 (0.0)	13 (54.2)	72.7	24

Table 6 – depicting the development in the period 1990-1997 – gives rise to two observations. First, we see that there is no increasing gap between liberal and electoral democracy in this part of the 1990s. Strikingly parallel to the global level, the year 1991 is the only exception to this pattern. The genesis of so many post-communist countries in that year created a situation in which liberal democracies were outnumbered by one-to-two by their electoral equivalents. After 1991, however, the situation reversed as the liberal democracies have outnumbered the electoral democracies with a factor of at least two-to-one.

The dominance of the purely liberal democracies is a trifle lower than that found at the global level but the important thing is that the gap is not in the increase.

Second, and related, we find more illiberal autocracies in the post-communist cluster than on the global level, relatively speaking. This should not come as a surprise considering that all post-communist countries were in fact illiberal autocracies as recently as 1989, i.e., in the period prior to that covered here. But how about the subsequent period?

Table 7: The alternative typological account of political regime forms in the post-communist setting, 1998-2005

Year	Liberal Democracies (N, %)	Electoral Democracies (N, %)	Liberal Autocracies (N, %)	Illiberal autocracies (N, %)	Liberal democracies as percentage of all electoral democracies	Total N
1998	9 (37.5)	3 (12.5)	0 (0.0)	12 (50.0)	75.0	24
1999	9 (37.5)	3 (12.5)	0 (0.0)	12 (50.0)	75.0	24
2000	9 (37.5)	3 (12.5)	0 (0.0)	12 (50.0)	75.0	24
2001	9 (37.5)	3 (12.5)	0 (0.0)	12 (50.0)	75.0	24
2002	11 (45.8)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	13 (54.2)	100.0	24
2003	11 (45.8)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	13 (54.2)	100.0	24
2004	10 (41.7)	0 (0.0)	1 (4.1)	13 (54.2)	100.0	24
2005	11 (45.8)	0 (0.0)	1 (4.1)	12 (50.0)	100.0	24

Table 7 traces the development trends up to 2005. Once again, we find a pattern rather reminiscent of that identified on the global level. The illiberal autocracies are able to hold their own (their proportion never falls below 50 per cent), but the liberal democracies are the only democracies left standing at the end of the period – as a proportion of all democracies, they reach 100 per cent in the period 2002-2005.

In other words, the electoral democracies simply die out in the new millennium; their extinction mirrors the victory of their liberal counterparts. Within the post-communist setting, since 2002 the distinction between the electoral and liberal components of democracy

may have been full of sound and fury conceptually – but empirically it has literally been signifying nothing.

To sum up, although we find a different distribution of political regime forms in the post-communist microcosm of the third wave-universe, we find very much the same trends; and hence we find no differences with regard to the conclusion concerning the gap between electoral and liberal democracy. Where does this leave us?

5. Concluding on the gap between electoral and liberal democracy

In this chapter, I have attempted to develop a conceptualisation of democracy capable of making a systematic distinction between the electoral and the liberal component of 'liberal' or 'modern' democracy. This conceptualisation and the subsequent empirical analysis of the third wave of democracy follow in the footsteps of that crafted by Larry Diamond in *Developing Democracy*. However, I part ways with Diamond by operationalising the electoral and liberal dimensions as independent of each other, as different attributes so to say.

To do this theoretically, I have departed from Schumpeter's classical electoral definition yet have maintained his emphasis on democracy as a method. Assisted by Dahl's notion of polyarchy and O'Donnell's focus on a liberal state capable of upholding the rule of law, I have arrived at a fourfold typology of political regime forms. In emphasising both the electoral and the liberal element of democracy, this typology exhausts the dependent variable of the political regime form.

When I reanalyse the period placed under scrutiny by Diamond, i.e., 1990-1997, I find myself forced to qualify his conclusions concerning the current (and, in particular, the 'illiberal' undertow) of the third wave – both globally and in the context of the post-communist subset. Treated as independent attributes, the gap between the electoral and the liberal component is not in the increase, and this pattern is only strengthened in the subsequent period, i.e., 1998-2005, where it is more or less disappearing.

To a large extent, the same logical flaw seems to lie behind the earlier mentioned observations of Guillermo O'Donnell[34] and Fareed Zakaria (on Zakaria, see appendix 5). The conceptual conclusion is, therefore, inescapable. If we are to operate with two independent dimensions of democracy, one electoral and one liberal – and if we trust that the Freedom

[34] This is less the case for O'Donnell as he is mostly interested in Latin America, a setting in which the gap seems to be somewhat more meaningful than on the global level. See the Freedom House scores for Latin America, 1990-2005.

House ratings actually measure what they claim to measure – then there is no increasing gap between the electoral and the liberal component of democracy, and there has not really been one during the latest one-and-a-half decades. Doing better with regard to one element most often means doing better with regard to the other. To be sure, these are big 'ifs'. But the result of the analysis should still be noted because a lot of recent writings on democracy, that do in fact accept these 'ifs', seem to obscure these empirical facts because they do not pay heed to the taxonomic logic.

Or to hammer the conclusion home: the corrective to the conventional wisdom about a gap between electoral and liberal democracy presented in the preceding analyses is not a product of employing different thresholds. Rather, it is the product of keeping conceptually independent dimensions independent empirically (as they must be according to the underlying systematized concept). And this is, arguably, what makes this chapter's categorisation more 'valid' than that used by Larry Diamond.

Appendix 1. Counting rules for the typology of political regime forms

With a Freedom House ratings threshold of 2 on both the electoral dimension ('political rights') and its liberal equivalent ('civil liberties'), the counting rules of my typology are very simple:

- A Freedom House score that equals or is lower than 2 on both 'political rights' and 'civil liberties' provides for the political regime form of 'liberal democracy' [+ electoral property; + liberal property] for any given country.
- A Freedom House score that equals or is lower than 2 on 'political rights' but higher than 2 on 'civil liberties' provides for 'electoral democracy' [+ electoral property; - liberal property] for any given country.
- A Freedom House score that is higher than 2 on 'political rights' but that equals or is lower than 2 on 'civil liberties' provides for 'liberal autocracy' [- electoral property; + liberal property] for any given country.
- A Freedom House score that is higher than 2 on both 'political rights' and 'civil liberties' provides for 'illiberal autocracy' [- electoral property; - liberal property] for any given country.

To give four empirical examples:

- Afghanistan 1990 (PR = 7; CL = 7)
- Antigua & Barbuda 1990 (PR = 3; CL = 2)
- Argentina 1990 (PR = 1; CL = 3)
- Australia 1990 (PR = 1; CL = 1)

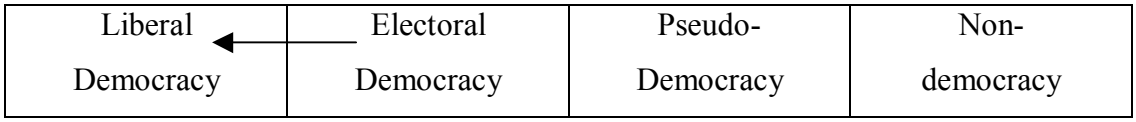
	+ Freedom rights & rule of law	- Freedom rights & rule of law
+ Free & fair elections	Australia 1990	Argentina 1990
- Free & fair elections	Antigua & Barbuda 1990	Afghanistan 1990

Appendix 2. A practical comparison of Diamond's typology and the alternative typology

This appendix gives two examples that are meant to demonstrate the practical and logical differences between Diamond's typology from *Developing Democracy* and that conceptualised in this chapter.

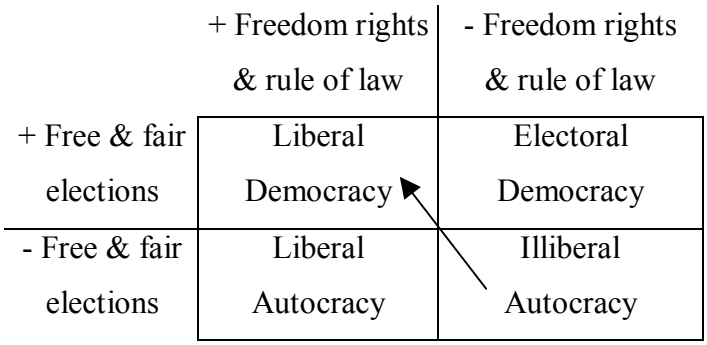
1a. The movement within Diamond's typology that occurs as a result of a hypothetical country improving its Freedom House rating on both 'political rights' and 'civil liberties' from 4 to 2:

Figure A: Diamond-example 1



1b. The movement that would occur within the alternative typology as a consequence of the same improvement:

Figure B: The alternative typology-example 1

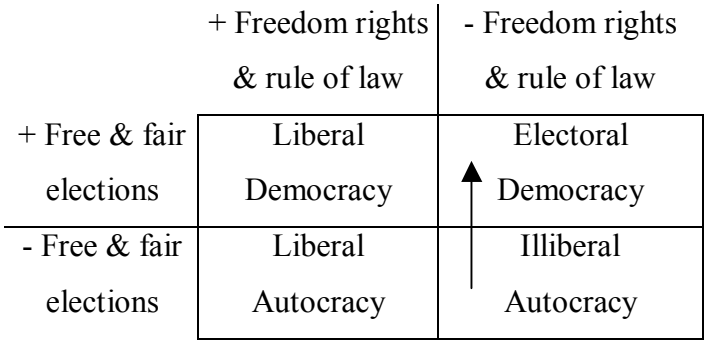


2a. The movement within Diamond's typology that occurs as a result of a hypothetical country improving its Freedom House rating on 'political rights' from 4 to 2 while maintaining a rating of 3 on 'civil liberties':

Figure C: Diamond-example 2

2a. The movement that would occur within the alternative typology as a consequence of the same improvement:

Figure D: The alternative typology-example 2



Notice, how a country in Diamond's typology can make one and the same move between types irrespective of whether its score changes on one or two attributes while this is not the case in my, alternative typology. This is the practical consequence of relying on a pure classification – or on *quasi-types* – and a genuine typological schema, respectively.

Appendix 3. Changing the thresholds

In Diamond's original typology, the Freedom House threshold was to be found between 2 and 3. This is a threshold that is logically impossible to use with regard to my alternative typology. But what if we choose to place the threshold at 3, i.e., on the other side of Diamond's threshold but at an equal distance as that hitherto used in this chapter. Are the conclusions of this paper reconfirmed when undertaking such a test for robustness? The consequent empirical results are illustrated below.

Table A: My account of political regime forms, 1990-1997, thresholds = 3

Year	Liberal democracies (N, %)	Electoral democracies (N, %)	Liberal autocracies (N, %)	Illiberal autocracies (N, %)	Liberal democracies as percentage of all democracies	Total N
1990	69 (41.8)	6 (3.6)	4 (2.4)	86 (52.1)	92.0	165
1991	84 (45.7)	7 (3.8)	4 (2.2)	89 (48.4)	92.3	183
1992	89 (47.8)	6 (3.2)	10 (5.4)	81 (43.5)	93.7	186
1993	81 (42.6)	18 (9.5)	4 (2.1)	87 (45.8)	81.8	190
1994	81 (42.4)	20 (10.5)	8 (4.2)	82 (42.9)	80.2	191
1995	82 (42.9)	17 (8.9)	7 (3.7)	85 (44.5)	82.8	191
1996	86 (45.0)	17 (8.9)	7 (3.7)	81 (42.4)	83.5	191
1997	88 (46.1)	17 (8.9)	5 (2.6)	81 (42.4)	83.8	191

Table B: My account of political regime forms, 1990-1997, thresholds = 3

Year	Liberal democracies (N, %)	Electoral democracies (N, %)	Liberal autocracies (N, %)	Illiberal autocracies (N, %)	Liberal democracies as percentage of democracies	Total N
1998	92 (48.2)	15 (7.9)	4 (2.1)	80 (41.8)	86.0	191
1999	92 (47.9)	14 (7.3)	4 (2.1)	82 (42.7)	86.8	192
2000	93 (48.3)	11 (5.7)	6 (3.1)	82 (42.7)	89.4	192
2001	93 (48.4)	11 (5.7)	6 (3.1)	82 (42.7)	89.4	192
2002	99 (51.6)	7 (3.6)	5 (2.6)	81 (42.2)	93.4	192
2003	103 (53.6)	6 (3.1)	5 (2.6)	78 (40.6)	94.5	192
2004	106 (55.2)	5 (2.6)	6 (3.1)	75 (39.1)	95.5	192
2005	110 (57.3)	4 (2.1)	6 (3.1)	72 (37.5)	96.5	

At first glance, these findings seemingly point in the same direction as those of Diamond. As a proportion of democracies, the liberal ones did indeed decline during the former part of the 1990s – from 92 per cent of all democracies in 1990 to 83.8 per cent in 1997. But looks may be deceiving. At a closer inspection, the narrative told by the figures in table 4 is strikingly different from Diamond's. First, the increase is much smaller than that identified by Diamond, and it more or less dies out in the 2000s. Second, I find a lot more 'liberal autocracies' with these thresholds, something that only goes to show that there is no gap, merely oscillation within the 'missing' – or underlying – hybrid regime form category (anticipating the findings of chapter 2). Taken together, the conclusions of this chapter hold, and this is only strengthened by the development in the subsequent period, illustrated in table B above.

Appendix 4. A statistical reinvestigation of the typological analysis

1. Table C illustrates the statistical correlations between 'political rights' and 'civil liberties' on the global level in the period 1990-2005, as measured by bivariate correlations.

Table C: The bivariate correlations between 'political rights' and 'civil liberties' on the global level, 1990-2005

Year	Pearson's R	Total N
1990	.940	165
1991	.917	184
1992	.927	186
1993	.921	190
1994	.924	191
1995	.928	191
1996	.920	191
1997	.918	191
1998	.907	191
1999	.919	192
2000	.913	192
2001	.922	192
2002	.938	192
2003	.945	192
2004	.951	192
2005	.951	192

Recall the findings of the typological exercise: that the countries almost always travel in the same direction on both of the two dimensions and that this co-variation has not decreased since 1990. To corroborate this claim we must find that, first, the two dimensions correlate strongly and, second, the correlations have not decreased notably since the early 1990s. Both of these expectations are met empirically. Pearson's R is above .9 in the entire period, and the highest correlations are actually found in 2003 and 2004. Notice, however, that the lowest correlations are in 1997-2000, i.e., the years in which Diamond identified an increasing gap.

2. Table D illustrates the bivariate correlations between 'political rights' and 'civil liberties' in the post-communist setting in the period 1990-2004 as measured by bivariate correlations.

Table D: The bivariate correlations between 'political rights' and 'civil liberties' in the post-communist setting, 1990-2004

Year	Pearson's R	Total N
1990	.950	8
1991	.917	23
1992	.861	23
1993	.864	24
1994	.903	24
1995	.955	24
1996	.948	24
1997	.924	24
1998	.931	24
1999	.934	24
2000	.959	24
2001	.955	24
2002	.969	24
2003	.969	24
2004	.959	24
2004	.972	23

Needless to say, the statistical correlations of 1990 – with an N of 8 – are not very meaningful. The overall picture is, however, a clear one. Though more volatile than on the global level, which can probably be explained by the modest size of the N, the correlations are, firstly, very strong throughout the period and, secondly, do not systematically decrease during the period, the twin years of 1992 and 1993 excepted. The gap between liberal and electoral democracy is, thus, not a fact of life in the post-communist setting either, in particular not in the 2000s.

Appendix 5. Zakaria on the 'Rise of Illiberal Democracy'

In 1997, Fareed Zakaria published the oft-cited article 'The Rise of Illiberal Democracy' in *Foreign Affairs*; an early version of his influential 2003-book, *The Future of Freedom.* In the article, Zakaria carefully developed a conceptual distinction between the electoral and the liberal component of liberal democracy. The electoral attribute was construed as 'free and fair elections' whereas the liberal equivalent – what he also termed constitutional liberalism – included 'the rule of law, a separation of powers, and the protection of basic liberties of speech assembly, religion and property'.

Bearing this distinction in mind, Zakaria (1997 : 23) eloquently notes that '[t]oday the two strands of liberal democracy, interwoven in the Western political fabric, are coming apart in the rest of the world. Democracy is flourishing; constitutional liberalism is not'. On the basis of this inductive observation, Zakaria reaches two deductive theoretical conclusions. First, that the consequent new illiberal species of democracy is relatively stable – that it constitutes a dysfunctional equilibrium so to say. Second, that the increase in 'illiberal democracies' that has taken place in the 1990s is a harbinger of what is to come. Zakaria (1997 : 24) touches upon both of these points in the following sentences which are worth quoting at length:

> 'Illiberal democracy is a growth industry […] And to date few illiberal democracies have matured into liberal democracies; if anything, they are moving toward heightened illiberalism. Far from being a temporary or transitional stage, it appears that many countries are settling onto a form of government that mixes a substantial degree of democracy with a substantial degree of illiberalism'.

In this short appendix, I will reassess Zakaria's conceptual treatment of the electoral and liberal attributes and his consequent empirical analysis, just as I have done with Diamond's in chapter 1 proper. The aim is to probe, first, whether what Zakaria terms 'illiberal democracy' was – when operationalised systematically – in fact on the rise in the 1990s and, second, whether it has been on the rise since Zakaria's contribution was published in 1997, i.e., whether it has indeed established itself as a new species of democracy.

A. A conceptual critique

Zakaria (1997 : 23) uses the Freedom House ratings to illustrate 'the rise of illiberal democracy'. His point of departure is that the '[…] separate ratings for political liberties and

civil liberties […] correspond roughly with democracy and constitutional liberalism, respectively'. Visiting the *Freedom House Survey 1997* (i.e., covering the year of 1996), Zakaria (1997 : 24) finds that still more 'democratizing' countries are faring worse on the latter, liberal dimension than on the former, electoral dimension, culminating at the time of writing: 'Of the countries that lie between confirmed dictatorship and consolidated democracy, 50 percent do better on political liberties than on civil ones. In other words, half of the 'democratizing' countries in the world today are illiberal democracies'.

Zakaria spells out his operationalisation of 'democratizing states' and 'illiberal democracy' in an associated footnote. In brief, he has added up the Freedom House ratings on 'political rights' and 'civil liberties' (both 7-point scales) and thus created a one-dimensional index raging from a low of 2 (denoting the highest degree of 'freedom') to a high of 14 (denoting the lowest degree of 'freedom'). Zakaria considers any country scoring between 5 and 10 to be 'democratizing'. Half of these are then, to reiterate, 'illiberal democracies' in the 1997-survey because their 'political rights'-scores are better (i.e., lower) than their 'civil liberties'-scores.

Let us try to reflect a bit on this conceptual exercise. As already emphasized, Zakaria deliberately advances a purely electoral definition of democracy. The noun 'democracy' thus denotes the presence of free and fair elections and nothing else. The adjective 'liberal', on the other hand, denotes the presence of constitutional liberalism, i.e., in particular the rule of law and certain freedom rights. If a country has both the electoral and the liberal attribute, then it is a 'liberal democracy'. If it only has the electoral attribute, then it is an 'illiberal democracy'.

This consequently means that any country scoring between 5 and 10 (when adding up the two attributes) is considered to be a democracy by Zakaria. Otherwise, it is not possible to identify 'illiberal democracies' within this terrain. That is almost exactly the class that the Freedom House terms 'partly free' – and almost exactly the class that I will term 'hybrid regime' in chapter 2. And since democracy, to Zakaria, basically denotes the presence of the electoral attribute, this means that these countries are posited as having, at least to a large extent, free and fair elections.

That seems faulty considering that this class (in the survey covering 1996 that Zakaria employs) contains countries such as Burkina Faso (PR = 5, CL = 4), Eritrea (PR = 6, CL = 4), Gabon (PR = 5, CL = 4), Kuwait (PR = 5, CL = 5), Morocco (PR = 5, CL = 5), Tanzania (PR = 5, CL = 5), Zambia (PR = 5, CL = 4), and Zimbabwe (PR = 5, CL = 5). None of these countries figure on the Freedom House's own, rather lax list of 'electoral democracies' for

the same year. There is one very good reason for that: they do not, according to any meaningful criterion, have free and fair elections.

These are only the most extreme particular examples but the point I wish to make here is a more general one, viz., that Zakaria commits a clear case of 'conceptual stretching' – i.e., of subsuming empirical referents under a concept that does not cover these by his own definition (free and fair elections) – when he uses the term 'illiberal democracy' to cover some of the referents in this class.[35] In my opinion, he is merely showing that many of the countries that are 'hybrid regimes', not democracies, do better on the electoral than the liberal dimension for the year of 1996. The conceptual stretching is then further enhanced in the text where Zakaria discusses a number of countries which are not even covered by Freedom House's class of 'partly free' as examples of 'illiberal democracies', e.g. Iran, Kazakhstan, and Belarus – as he himself acknowledges in the aforementioned footnote.[36]

That is not the only conceptual problem. The other, equally salient one is that Zakaria, too, uses a one-dimensional classification to identify 'democratizing' states, i.e., he identifies them by collapsing the electoral and the liberal attribute. Differently said, the democratic merits are determined on the aggregate score of 'electoralness' and 'liberalness'. But recall that Zakaria makes a clear distinction between these two components of liberal democracy – and emphasizes that democracy rests on an electoral criterion only. If he were to follow a stringent logic of conceptualisation, then he would, arguably, end up with the following typological edifice.

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[35] On conceptual stretching, see Sartori (1970). As Sartori succinctly puts it, '[…] 'conceptual stretching' […] adds up to being an attempt to augment the extension without diminishing the intension: *the denotation is extended by obfuscating the connotation*' (1041). With regard to democracy, Collier and Levitsky (1997 : 431) translate this into the assertion that '[…] conceptual stretching […] arises when the concept of democracy is applied to cases for which, by relevant scholarly standards, it is not appropriate'. This is a very common understanding (see also Gerring, 1999) of conceptual stretching but I find it inadequate. Technically, stretching arises when the empirical referents are subsumed under a concept which does not cover these by his own denotative definition – or only does so because the denotative definition is not loyal to the prior connotative definition. And this is how I define 'conceptual stretching' in this dissertation.

[36] Also, some of the countries posited as being more liberal than democratic – e.g. Malaysia (Pr =4, CL = 5), Singapore (PR = 4, CL = 5) and Japan (PR = 1, CL = 2) – do in fact score lower (i.e., better) on 'political rights' than 'civil liberties' in the 1997-Survey.

Figure E: A typology of political regime forms

		Liberal component	
		+ Constitutional liberalism	- Constitutional liberalism
Electoral component	+ Electoral democracy	Liberal democracy	Illiberal democracy[37]
	- Electoral democracy	Liberal autocracy	Illiberal autocracy

What I have combined here is once again two one-dimensional classifications – viz., dichotomous orderings on the electoral and the liberal attribute, respectively – thus creating an ordering on a compound of attributes, i.e., a fourfold typology. Following Zakaria, whether a country is an 'electoral democracy' here only depends upon the presence or absence of the electoral component, i.e., 'free and fair elections'. Likewise, whether a country is characterized by 'constitutional liberalism' only depends upon the presence or absence of the electoral component, i.e., 'rule of law and freedom rights'.

This typological construct provides a pivot for checking whether 'illiberal democracy' is, relatively speaking, on the rise in a given period. If such is the case, then the empirical referents in type 2 (illiberal democracy) should increase as a proportion of the empirical referents in type 1 (liberal democracy) and type 2 taken together, i.e., of all the countries that are electoral democracies. The Freedom House ratings can once again be employed as indicator. 'Political rights' cover the electoral component whereas the 'civil liberties' cover the liberal component. Once again, the threshold of 2 in the Freedom House ratings of political rights and civil liberties is used to denote the presence of the electoral and the liberal property, respectively.

With this two-fold conceptual critique in mind let us revisit the empirics to see if Zakaria's observations about the increase of 'illiberal democracy' did really play out in the

[37] Notice the slight change in nomenclature as compared to the typology crafted in chapter 1 proper. This time around I term the diminished subtype combining the absence of free and fair elections with the presence of constitutional liberalism (i.e., freedom rights and the rule of law) 'illiberal democracy' rather than 'electoral democracy'. This change is the consequence of following in the footsteps of Zakaria's purely electoral definition of democracy (as opposed to Diamond's more encompassing definition which embeds the liberal property).

1990s and whether it has increased in the 2000s. To do so I will employ both Zakaria's own operationalisation and the alternative one that is built up around my conceptual critique.

B. An empirical re-evaluation

In table E, I have extended Zakaria's analysis both back in time (to 1990) and into the present (to 2005). What can we say about the dynamics of what Zakaria terms 'democratizing states' (i.e., roughly the countries belonging to Freedom House's class of 'partly free')?

Table E: Redoing Zakaria's analysis for the period of 1990-2005

Year	Democra-tizing states	Democrat-izing states with PR < CL	Democra-tizing states with PR > CL	Democra-tizing states with PR = CL	Democratizing states with PR < CL as % of all democratizing states
1990	54	18	16	20	33.3
1991	76	31	21	24	40.8
1992	76	29	23	24	38.2
1993	71	34	11	26	47.9
1994	74	38	14	22	51.4
1995	71	32	12	27	45.1
1996	70	35	12	23	50.0
1997	70	34	14	22	48.6
1998	75	36	19	20	48.0
1999	73	33	12	28	45.2
2000	65	29	12	24	44.6
2001	69	28	13	28	40.6
2002	69	25	12	32	36.2
2003	67	17	15	35	25.4
2004	66	16	17	33	24.2
2005	68	12	20	36	17.6

We see that the number of what Zakaria terms 'democratizing states' has been rather stable, only oscillating between a low of 65 and a high of 76 in the entire period of 1991-2005.[38] The number of democratizing states doing better on 'political rights' than 'civil liberties' (Zakaria's 'illiberal democracies') has not been very stable in the same period, however. In absolute terms, the number has oscillated between 36 (1998) and 12 (2005). In relative terms – i.e., as a proportion of all democratizing states – the oscillation is also very large, from a high of 51 percent in 1994 to a low of 18 percent in 2005.

Two points can be made with regard to these trends. First, they underline that the illiberal species of democracy (which is really a species of hybrid regime using Zakaria's conceptualisation) is not a stable political regime form over the period – no dysfunctional equilibrium seems to exist in this 'grey zone' between democracy and autocracy. Second, it turns out that 'illiberalness' of these countries has not been on the rise since Zakaria vented his warning; rather, it has clearly been on the wane. In 2004 and 2005 countries that do better on 'civil liberties' (the liberal attribute) even outnumber those doing better on 'political rights' (the electoral attribute).

This drop in 'illiberal democracies' became quite salient as early as 2002, and it thus seems to be a bit of an overstatement when Zakaria (2003 : 99), having scrupulously noted that the number is on the decrease, in his 2003-book remarks that '[s]till, as of this writing close to half of the 'democratizing' countries in the world are illiberal democracies'. On one account Zakaria was right, though. The 'illiberal democracies' did grow as a proportion of all 'democratizing states' in the period leading up to the publication of his 1997-article. But does this conclusion hold if we instead use the alternative conceptualisation, i.e., the typology of political regime forms?

[38] Redoing Zakaria's analysis, I do not find that countries with lower ratings on 'political rights' than 'civil liberties' make up 35 percent of all the 'democratizing states' in the 1992-Survey (i.e., the numbers covering 1991) – as he did. Rather, I find the proportion to be 41 percent.

Table F: The alternative typological account of political regime forms, 1990-2005

Year	Liberal democracies (N, %)	Illiberal democracies (N, %)	Liberal autocracies (N, %)	Illiberal autocracies (N, %)	Illiberal democracies as percentage of all democracies	Total N
1990	51 (30.9)	14 (8.5)	2 (1.2)	98 (59.4)	21.5	165
1991	52 (28.3)	26 (14.1)	1 (0.5)	105 (57.1)	33.3	184
1992	57 (30.7)	19 (10.2)	3 (1.6)	107 (57.5)	25.0	186
1993	57 (30.0)	19 (10.0)	1 (0.5)	113 (59.5)	25.0	190
1994	57 (29.8)	22 (11.5)	2 (1.1)	110 (57.6)	27.8	191
1995	63 (33.0)	18 (9.4)	0 (0.0)	110 (57.6)	22.2	191
1996	64 (33.5)	22 (11.5)	0 (0.0)	105 (55.0)	25.6	191
1997	64 (33.5)	21 (11.0)	0 (0.0)	106 (55.5)	24.7	191
1998	64 (33.5)	24 (12.6)	1 (0.5)	102 (53.4)	27.3	191
1999	67 (34.9)	19 (9.9)	0 (0.0)	106 (55.2)	22.1	192
2000	69 (35.9)	19 (9.9)	1 (0.5)	103 (53.6)	21.6	192
2001	66 (34.4)	20 (10.4)	2 (1.0)	104 (54.2)	23.3	192
2002	72 (37.5)	15 (7.8)	3 (1.6)	102 (53.1)	17.2	192
2003	75 (39.1)	11 (5.7)	3 (1.6)	103 (53.6)	12.8	192
2004	76 (39.6)	11 (5.7)	2 (1.0)	103 (53.6)	12.6	192
2005	79 (41.1)	7 (3.6)	3 (1.6)	103 (53.6)	8.1	192

Table F shows that the 'illiberal democracies' as a proportion of all 'electoral democracies' was in fact a very stable one during the period 1990-1997. With the sole exception of 1991, it lay relatively close to 25 percent. In plain English, when the electoral and illiberal attributes are kept conceptually independent of each other, we do not really find any rise of 'illiberal democracy' over the period. Furthermore, the figures show the same tendency as evinced in the prior extension of Zakaria's analysis; that the relative frequency has been very much on the wane since the late 1990s.

Thus, once again, we see that the gap (which is, to reiterate, really a 'hybrid regimes'-gap in Zakaria's case) dissolves over time. This conclusion therefore very much echoes the one I arrived at when revisiting Diamond's analysis from *Developing Democracy*.

Chapter 2. The Post-communist Tripartition Described

What emerges from the findings of chapter 1? The paradoxical conclusion is that a conceptualisation that is actually able to appreciate the distinction between the electoral and the liberal component of democracy is worth little empirically. Beyond the finding that there is no gap between the electoral and liberal dimensions, the constructed typology tells us preciously little about the political dynamics on the ground. The reason is straightforward: while the polar type of 'liberal democracy' is empirically useful, its opposite number – the polar type of 'illiberal autocracy' – becomes a residual category which contain a large number of countries which have very little in common politically. By implication, the only 'gap' pointed to by the preceding analysis seems to be between stable liberal democracies on the one hand and countries moving to and fro all the three other types in the typology – or at least staying within the 'lower' regions of the 'illiberal autocracy'-type – on the other hand.

It is really this 'gap' that Diamond zooms in on. In his reading of the numbers, it becomes a gap between electoral and liberal democracy because these two quasi-types are operationalised using one dimension only. Situated in the middle of the one-dimensional continuum, they logically tend to fall into the class of electoral democracy as this class is based not only on electoral merits but on the combination of electoral and liberal ones. That the actual gap is of this kind also seems to be Diamond's (at least implicit) conclusion in his more recent pieces. Instead of talking about the electoral and liberal democracies partings ways, he refers to the increase of 'pseudodemocracies'. To quote: 'Thus the trend toward democracy has been accompanied by an even more dramatic trend toward pseudodemocracy' (2002 : 27). One could also speak about a trend toward 'hybrid regimes' which is indeed the very headline Diamond is working under in the mentioned article.

Only an additional empirical analysis can determine whether such a dividing line is indeed a salient phenomenon and whether it has been on the increase during the 1990s and 2000s. But the conceptual stadium precedes the empirical and to capture this distinction, it is necessary to conceptualise and measure 'democracy' using one dimension only. This can be done either by referring to the electoral property (or dimension) only – as Diamond has proposed in his more recent writings – or by demonstrating that the electoral and liberal properties are in sync, and that they can thus be added up as one attribute. This latter way out of the conceptual mess is that pointed to by the preceding analysis.

In gist, chapter 1 has demonstrated that the proposition about a gap between electoral and liberal democracy has tended to ignore the intimate empirical relationship between liberal constitutionalism on the one hand (the liberal property) and free and fair elections on the other hand (the electoral property). Simply stated, the liberal attribute must – empirically if not theoretically – be present for the elections to be free and fair. Needless to say, this conclusion is only valid for the examined years and the examined settings. Yet these are exactly the years that interest me, and the post-communist setting has been thoroughly scrutinized above. In the subsequent sections, I will thus attempt to develop a new conceptualisation along the lines proposed here.

1. Dealing a new deck of cards

In an article on 'Comparative-Historical Methodology' from 2004, James Mahoney discusses some of the main advantages of paying intimate attention to matters of concept formation. One of them is, he argues, that it is possible to revisit the point of departure, should one's first conceptual track prove a dead-end, or not to be up to the task, empirically. To quote his (2004 : 95) own wording,

> '[…] researchers can easily move back and forth between conceptual definitions, indicators, and scores for cases in many rounds of iteration. Operational definitions and indicators can be refined in light of initial efforts to score cases; likewise, conclusions about the inadequacy of indicators can lead scholars to revisit the very definitions of the concept being measured'.[39]

This is exactly what I aim to do here. Notice how my criticism of Diamond – and of other proponents of making a conceptual and operational separation between the electoral and liberal dimensions – is situated from the level of the systematized concept and downward. Hence, it is neither necessary to revisit the background concept nor to change much with regard to the systematized concept. With this in mind, let us enter at the appropriate level.

1.1 The systematized concept

Conceptually, the electoral and the liberal attribute of democracy are separate things. But on the basis of the analysis of chapter 1, I now argue that they can be added up as one attribute

[39] The very same point is emphasised by Adcock and Collier (2001: 530).

because they are almost always in sync empirically – at least in the period and setting that interest me. This move is quite straightforward. As Gerardo L. Munck has pointed out, a clear correlation between any two dimensions (*in casu* along the diagonal of the typological property space of figure 6 in chapter 1) justifies collapsing them. To quote (2006 : 36-37),

> '[…] the closer the data are aligned on the diagonal linking the bottom left corner to the top right corner of the property space, the more correlated the data are and the less of a loss of information is incurred in aggregation – in other words, the less the view of the trees will get lost in the picture of the forest'.

In the present case, where the countries cluster overwhelmingly along the diagonal (i.e., in the respective types of 'liberal democracy' and 'illiberal autocracy'), the trees are thus likely to remain clearly discernable.

Notice that there is no need whatsoever to expand the connotations of 'democracy'. The gist of the matter is that the taxonomic exercise must be altered. The reason is a simple one. Working with a compound of attributes, as I have done in chapter 1, makes for a typology, i.e., an ordering on more than one dimension. Working with serial operations on one attribute, on the contrary, makes for a pure classification, i.e., an ordering based on one dimension only. To state it somewhat more particularly, the move from two dimensions implies that we discard the distinction between the electoral and liberal faces of the political regime form. Instead, focus is now placed on the dimension that captures the general distinction between democracy and autocracy. Yet to appreciate the actual empirical gap – the one Diamond identified yet mislabelled – it is necessary to insert a class between these two opposites, namely that of 'hybrid regime'.[40]

[40] Sartori (1987) has argued that democracy is inherently a 'contrary' to non-democracy and must thus be conceptualised using a dichotomy. However, as Collier and Adcock (1999 : 543) has shown, this proposition cannot be made in a generic fashion. Instead, Collier and Adcock advocate a 'pragmatic' approach, one focusing on the problem under scrutiny and the matching empirical context. To quote, '[…] scholars should be cautious in claiming to have come up with a definitive interpretation of a concept's meaning. It is more productive to establish an interpretation that is justified at least in part by its suitability to their immediate research goals and to the specific research tradition within which they are working' (546). This appreciation of the context is exactly what I sought to include in this chapter. On the empirical value of including the intermediate category, see also Epstein, Bates, Goldstone, Kristensen and O'Hallran (2006).

Why is that? Recall that one of the shortcomings of the preceding typology was that the polar type of 'illiberal autocracy' swallowed up a large number of countries that in fact differed significantly politically. In other words, it became a residual category when it should not have been. There were simply far too many illiberal autocracies which had far too little in common, not least in the post-communist setting where around half of the countries belonged to this class.[41] Consequently, I will carve out the three classes of 'democracy', 'hybrid regime' and 'autocracy' along the dimension covering the political regime form. How do these fill out the connotative space of the systematized concept?

First, a country may be classified as a 'democracy' if it, when these are treated as a whole, fulfils i) Schumpeter's criterion of free and fair elections for political leadership, ii) Dahl's criterion of certain liberal rights, and iii) O'Donnell's criterion of the rule of law. Second, a country may be classified as an 'autocracy' if it, when these are treated as a whole, falls short with regards to i) Schumpeter's criterion of free and fair elections for political leadership, ii) Dahl's criterion of certain liberal rights, and iii) O'Donnell's criterion of the rule of law. Third, a country may be classified as a 'hybrid regime' if it is situated in-between these two classes. That is, it must, when these are treated as a whole, go some way towards fulfilling i) Schumpeter's criterion of free and fair elections for political leadership, ii) Dahl's criterion of certain liberal rights, and iii) O'Donnell's criterion of the rule of law but still fall short with regard to the operationalised threshold.[42] The consequent classification is depicted in figure 1.

Figure 1: A classification of political regime forms

Democracy	Hybrid regime	Autocracy

[41] The conceptual aspect of this observation is that the prior definition of 'illiberal autocracy' constituted a case of conceptual stretching, i.e., of subsuming empirical referents under a concept that does not cover these by his own definition (the full absence of the electoral and liberal properties). This was necessary to test Diamond's claim about a gap between electoral and liberal democracy but it is not necessary when these two dimensions are collapsed.

[42] I might seem preferable to define this category as instances which fulfil i) Schumpeter's criterion of free and fair elections for political leadership, OR ii) Dahl's criterion of certain liberal rights, OR iii) O'Donnell's criterion of the rule of law – but still fall short on the average of these three attributes. However, as demonstrated in chapter 1 and the first part of chapter 2, the countries do in fact move in the same direction on the separate indicators. Hence, the logical OR would not really be helpful. It is, and this is important, the average scores on the separate attributes that delimit the three categories, hybrid regimes included.

Obviously, harking back to Munck's argument about the correlation between the two dimensions stated above, this tripartite division on the dependent variable ultimately rests on the claim that the empirical referents would also clump along the diagonal if I were to trichotomise the electoral and the liberal dimension, respectively, thus creating a property space consisting of nine types. The very strong statistical cross-temporal correlations between the Freedom House's own orderings on the two dimensions – cf. figure 9 in chapter 1 – indicate that this is indeed the case; which, to reiterate, is not surprising considering that the cases clump along the diagonal when crafting a typology consisting of four types. Hence, this demonstration seems superfluous in the present case.

Once again, I have thus developed a scheme that exhausts the background concept and spells out the possible variants in a systematic manner. The last thing remaining on this level is to specify the connotative definitions of these three classes, i.e., to exhaust the attribute space of the classification. I propose the following definitions.

1) Democracy is *a political regime form that – when collapsing the attributes – clearly combines the presence of i) free electoral competition for political leadership with the presence of ii) a liberal state able to uphold certain liberal rights through the rule of law.*
2) Hybrid regime is *a political regime form that – when collapsing the attributes – neither clearly combines the presence nor the absence of i) free electoral competition for political leadership with the presence or absence of ii) a liberal state able to uphold certain liberal rights through the rule of law.*
3) Autocracy is *a political regime form that – when collapsing the attributes – clearly combines the absence of i) free electoral competition for political leadership with the absence of ii) a liberal state able to uphold certain liberal rights through the rule of law.*

1.2 Indicators

Once again, it is necessary to move from the connotative definitions to their denotative equivalents and hence to tackle Sartori's three operational problems: the border problem (to be settled by denotative definitions); the membership problem (to be settled by precising definitions); and the measurability problem (to be settled by operational definitions).

This time around, however, the logical problems are easier to handle. Since it is only the taxonomic exercise that has changed, there is no need to change the solution to the border

problem. Suffice to say that the 'elaborated Dahlian model' with its eight criteria (figure 7 in chapter 1) still does the trick.

The membership problem is a more complicated matter. To reiterate, what is necessary here is to ensure that all countries, or referents, scrutinized will fit logically into the crafted classification, including the requirement that the classes are mutually exclusive. I propose the following, very simple, precising definitions with respect to the four classes:

1) Democracy is *a political regime form where the eight criteria – when added*[43] *up – are clearly fulfilled.*
2) Hybrid regime is *a political regime form where the eight criteria – when added up – are neither clearly fulfilled nor clearly violated.*
3) Autocracy is *a political regime form where the eight criteria – when added up – are clearly violated*.

Notice that the definitions thus delimit the classes using averages instead of stressing that all eight criteria must – as bounded wholes (see chapter 6, appendix 1 on this notion) – be fulfilled in the case of 'democracy' whereas none must be fulfilled in the case of 'autocracy'. By implication, and referring back to fn. 42 above, I do not stipulate that the hybrid regimes connote a situation where a logical OR (rather than an AND) is used to underline that some but not all criteria are fulfilled. This may seem problematical considering the classificatory logic. Giovanni Sartori (1970) has famously – and forcefully – warned against the exercise of 'degreeism', i.e., to construct classes with a reference to differences in degree rather than differences in kind and, by extension, to rely on detailed rank orderings rather than a dichotomous equivalent when constructing them. As Michael Coppedge has counter argued, however, '[i]f one wanted a categorical measure, it could always be derived from the continuous one by identifying more thresholds that correspond to the desired categories'. The only logical requirement for doing so is that

> '[…] the analyst examines the strength of association among the components to discover how many dimensions are represented among them and in the mother concept […] components that are very strongly associated with one another are treated as one-

[43] The reason that I simply add up the scores on the respective indicators – rather than multiply or weight them – is to avoid any accusations for tampering with the data.

dimensional, that is, as all measuring the same underlying dimension, and may be combined' (Coppedge, 1999 : 469-470. See also Munck, 2006).

This is exactly what I have done in this chapter. And this is why using the averages makes sense.

Finally, there is the measurability problem. This is where the real issue is at stake. I have already argued for relying on the Freedom House ratings concerning political rights and civil liberties to measure the eight criteria, and I will not repeat my discussion of the validity and reliability of these scores. Needless to say, the problems that were identified by this discussion are relevant for the classification just as they were for the typology. My precising definition rests upon the conceptual claim that in order to qualify as a democracy, the eight criteria must, when added up, be clearly fulfilled. On the contrary, they must, when added up, be clearly violated for a country to qualify as an autocracy. Every combination in between logically makes for a hybrid regime. What does this entail with regard to thresholds?

The Freedom House index assigns scores between 1 and 7 on both the electoral and the liberal dimension of democracy. Their own thresholds are worth visiting since they also divide the countries into three classes, namely 'free', 'partly free' and 'not free'. As mentioned earlier, the first of their thresholds (between 'free' and 'partly free') is situated at 2.5. My new class 'democracy' basically covers what 'liberal democracy' did in the typology. The one and only difference is that it is now possible for a country to pass the threshold to this class on the average score of 'political rights' and 'civil liberties' rather than having to pass each of these thresholds separately. Having said that, the logic is the same and so should the general threshold be. With this in mind, only countries that score 2 or better (my threshold from chapter 1) on the average of 'political rights' and 'civil liberties' will earn the predicate of 'democracy'.

But how about the threshold between hybrid regime and autocracy? Freedom House's second threshold, the one separating the classes of 'partly free' and 'not free' is situated at 5.5. I see no reason to alter this line of demarcation. Since I now rely on the average value on the two dimensions, there is no logical problem in using a 0.5 cut-off point. Also, keeping the threshold will allow me to stay close to the categories suggested by the Freedom House ratings. Hence, only countries that receive an average score on 'political rights' and 'civil

liberties' of 5.5[44] or higher will be classified as autocracies. This brings us to the following operational definition:

1) Democracy is *a political regime form where the average value of the eight criteria equals or is less than 2 when using the aggregate scores of 'political rights' and 'civil liberties' reported by the Freedom House.*
2) Hybrid regime is *a political regime form where the average value of the eight criteria is higher than 2 but lower than 5.5 when using the aggregate scores of 'political rights' and 'civil liberties' reported by the Freedom House.*
3) Autocracy is *a political regime form where the average value of the eight criteria equals or is higher than 5.5 when using the aggregate scores of 'political rights' and 'civil liberties' reported by the Freedom House.*

Any thresholds along one dimension only will be somewhat arbitrary. The same goes for these ones. Yet notice two arguments favouring them. First, the threshold delimiting the class of 'democracy' almost mirrors that used to delimit 'liberal democracy' in the preceding typological analysis. Differently said, what I have done is basically to unpack the type of 'illiberal autocracy' which – I have argued – became a residual type when it should not have been (due to the very significant diversity within this category). Second, the three classes almost cover the same empirical referents as the Freedom House-categories of 'free', 'partly free' and 'not free' do. The new operationalisation therefore passes what may most suitably be termed a *classificatory field test*.[45] Having thus descended the ladder of abstraction again, let us take a second look at the empirical world to test the value of this new conceptual and classificatory scheme.

[44] If I were to lower the threshold to 5.0, it would not make that much of a difference. Only 20 out of the 378 post-communist observations in the period 1991-2005 would change class by moving into that of 'autocracy'.

[45] This formulation paraphrases Sartori's (1987 : 264), so-called *semantic field test* which expresses the following rules: 'Whenever the definition given to the term unsettles the semantic field to which the term belongs, then it has to be shown that (*a*) no 'field meaning' is thrown overboard; and (*b*) the overall 'field ambiguity' (fuzziness, unboundedness, disorder) is not being increased'. My corresponding argument here is that I do not upset the dominant classification – that of Freedom House – of the empirical referents very much when using the mentioned thresholds.

2. A second glance at the global setting and post-communist cluster

What happens when we repeat the empirical investigation equipped with the new classification of political regime forms? The consequent global distribution for the period 1990-1997 is illustrated in table 1.

Table 1: The classificatory account of political regime forms on the global level, 1990-2005

Year	Democracies (N, %)	Hybrid regimes (N, %)	Autocracies (N, %)	Democracies as a proportion of non-autocracies	Total N
1990	53 (32.1)	54 (32.7)	58 (35.2)	49.5	165
1991	54 (29.3)	76 (41.3)	54 (29.3)	41.5	184
1992	57 (30.6)	76 (40.9)	53 (28.5)	42.9	186
1993	62 (32.6)	71 (37.4)	57 (30.0)	46.6	190
1994	62 (32.5)	74 (38.7)	55 (28.8)	45.6	191
1995	67 (35.1)	71 (37.2)	53 (27.7)	48.6	191
1996	68 (35.6)	70 (36.7)	53 (27.7)	49.3	191
1997	69 (36.1)	70 (36.7)	52 (27.2)	49.6	191
1998	69 (36.1)	75 (39.3)	47 (24.6)	47.9	191
1999	71 (37.0)	73 (38.0)	48 (25.0)	49.3	192
2000	74 (38.6)	65 (33.9)	53 (27.6)	53.2	192
2001	73 (38.0)	69 (35.9)	50 (26.0)	51.4	192
2002	73 (38.0)	69 (35.9)	50 (26.0)	51.4	192
2003	76 (39.6)	67 (34.9)	49 (25.5)	53.1	192
2004	77 (40.1)	66 (34.4)	49 (25.5)	53.8	192
2005	79 (41.1)	68 (35.4)	45 (23.4)	53.7	192

The revealed global pattern is a very stable one. Take the democracies. From an initial peak of almost 50 per cent of all non-autocracies[46] in 1990, the proportion fell to around 40 per

[46] The magnitude of 'democracies as a proportion of all non-autocracies' is used to measure the equivalent proportion as that measured by 'liberal democracies' as a proportion of all 'electoral democracies' in chapter 1. In both cases, the proportion expresses the number of 'proper' democracies as a proportion of all non-autocratic countries.

cent in the subsequent years, only to climb back to around 50 per cent by the late 1990s and even to surpass this proportion in the 2000s. Table 1 thus demonstrates that the tide of the third wave of democracy was not falling in the dying years of the 1990s and that it has actually been rising in the new millennium. Hence, and to reiterate, the third wave of democracy has not been hollowing out as Larry Diamond warned or even prophesised in *Developing Democracy*.

More important, however, is the empirical value of the new intermediate category. The class of hybrid regime claims membership of more than one-third of all countries throughout the period. This quite even distribution across the categories is the most salient difference to the distribution of empirical referents identified by the preceding typology, and it goes to show the analytical merits of the new classification. At the global level, the classification thus has a clear competitive edge when compared with the preceding typological schema. Most importantly, it captures the dividing line between democracies and hybrid regimes – the gap that Diamond correctly identified yet erroneously characterised as a gap between the liberal and the electoral aspect of democracy. As this analysis has demonstrated, it is a dividing line operating on *both* the electoral and the liberal dimension of democracy – which is why it makes sense to add these two dimensions up into a single attribute. Having said that, it is not a gap that is on the increase; it is its magnitude, not its momentum, which is interesting empirically.

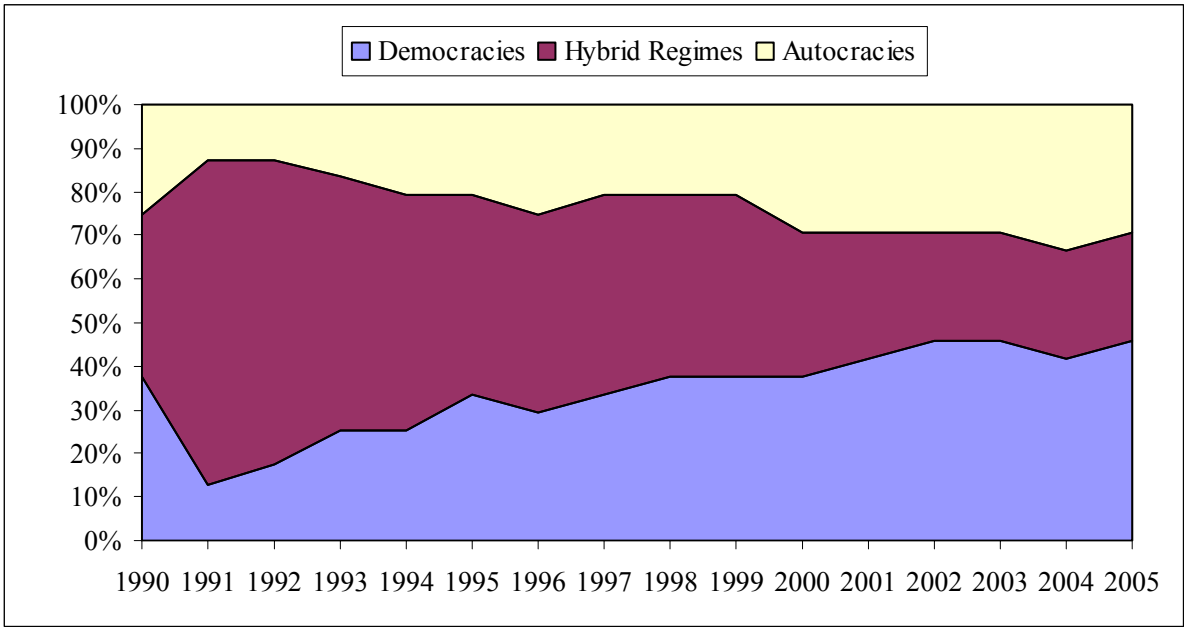
But the object of this study is, after all, to explain the diverging political paths found within the post-communist microcosm (or subset) of the global universe. Let us zoom in on this setting to see if the classification stands the ultimate test of relevance.

Table 2: The classificatory account of political regime forms in the post-communist setting, 1990-2005

Year	Democracies (N, %)	Hybrid regimes (N, %)	Autocracies (N, %)	Democracies as a proportion of non-autocracies	Total N
1990	3 (37.5)	3 (37.5)	2 (25.0)	50.0	8
1991	3 (11.5)	17 (65.4)	3 (11.5)	15.0	23
1992	4 (17.4)	16 (69.6)	3 (13.0)	20.0	23
1993	6 (25.0)	14 (58.3)	4 (16.7)	30.0	24
1994	6 (25.0)	13 (54.2)	5 (20.8)	31.6	24
1995	8 (33.3)	11 (45.8)	5 (20.8)	42.1	24
1996	7 (29.2)	11 (45.8)	6 (25.0)	38.9	24
1997	8 (33.3)	11 (45.8)	5 (20.8)	42.1	24
1998	9 (37.5)	10 (41.7)	5 (20.8)	47.4	24
1999	9 (37.5)	10 (41.7)	5 (20.8)	47.4	24
2000	9 (37.5)	8 (33.3)	7 (29.2)	52.9	24
2001	10 (41.7)	7 (29.2)	7 (29.2)	58.8	24
2002	11 (45.9)	6 (25.0)	7 (29.2)	64.7	24
2003	11 (45.9)	6 (25.0)	7 (29.2)	64.7	24
2004	10 (41.7)	6 (25.0)	8 (33.3)	62.5	24
2005	11 (45.9)	6 (25.0)	7 (29.2)	64.7	24

Table 2 shows that the post-communist setting was not in sync with the global dynamics in the 1990s. Instead of a relatively even tripartition, the class of hybrid regime housed more than half of all post-communist countries in the period 1991-1994. After the mid-1990s the democratic wave did really take off, however, and the democracies have outnumbered the hybrid regimes since 2000. This is illustrated in figure 2 where the relative 'weight' of the empirical referents that fall in each class is depicted cross-temporally. What also comes out from the figure is that the cases cluster at the extremes of 'democracy' and 'autocracy' over time – at the expense of the class of 'hybrid regime'.

Figure 2: The relative distribution of cases in the three classes on the dependent variable, 1990-2005



These very tangible dynamics only strengthen the analytical leverage of the classification. In the post-communist setting, the early 1990s did actually witness a salient gap between democracies and hybrid regimes. Since then, it has reversed in that the democracies have outnumbered the hybrid regimes by almost two-to-one since 2002. Such temporal variation facilitates studying the causes of the divergent political paths. Furthermore, no class is even close to emptying out over the entire period of 1990-2005, i.e., we clearly have a tripartition. In other words, the cross-temporal variation goes hand in hand with cross-sectional variation – which is a great advantage for anyone who wishes to use the comparative method.

To sum up, this classification provides a suitable pivot for analysing and explaining the divergent political paths found within the post-communist setting. Which is – not entirely incidentally – the very object of this study. Using the proper names of the empirical referents, the final section of this chapter illustrates the cross-sectional and cross-temporal differences and similarities within the post-communist setting that I wish to account for, i.e., those found in the period after the upheavals of 1989-1991. This will also allow me to briefly reintroduce the geographic dimension and the matching dividing lines between subregional clusters.

2.1 Post-communist political regime forms, 1992-2004

To make the combination of variation across space and time more manageable, i.e., to reduce the complexity of the presentation, I will only include the empirical distribution of every

second year. Also, I will only comment on the four years of 1992, 1996, 2000 and 2004, respectively – the four points in time I will focus on in the comparative analyses that I carry out in the subsequent chapters. The temporal demarcation line of 1992 has been chosen because the breakdown of the Soviet Union only finished in the preceding year. In other words, and generally speaking, 1992 is the first genuine year of post-communism. Other than that, 1992, 1996, 2000 and 2004 have not been chosen for some intrinsic qualities but to elucidate i) the early outcome of the transition (1992), ii) the mid-term occurrences (1996 and 2000), and iii) the longer-term[47] developments (2004), i.e., to explain both the political pathways of post-communism and the cross-case divisions at different temporal points along these paths.

Unfortunately, as will be demonstrated in chapter 3, some of the actor-centred variables that I use have to be measured as late as the mid-1990s. Hence, in the initial actor-centred analysis, I will not be able to include the year of 1992 on the dependent variable because of what John Gerring (2001 : 125-127) terms 'priority', viz., that the cause(s) must predate the effect on the dimension of time. In the subsequent structural analysis, however, I am able to include all four years. Let us take a look at the distribution on the dependent variable in the period of 1992-2004. Are there any noticeable cross-spatial patterns? And do they change cross-temporally?

Figure 3: The empirical distribution of political regime forms within the post-communist setting in 1992

Democracies	Hybrid regimes	Autocracies
Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia	Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Mongolia, Romania, Russia, Ukraine	Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

[47] Needless to say, the notions of short-term and long-term are arbitrary. In the present case, 2004 is long-term considering the time of writing. 1992 is more genuinely short-term considering the genesis of post-communism in 1989-1991.

Figure 3 sends two clear messages. First, after communism had been relegated to 'the ash heap of history', hybrid regimes dominated the setting. In 1992, sixteen out of twenty-three post-communist states belonged in this class. Only four were democracies whereas another three had never embarked from their autocratic point of departure. Second, the geographical distribution was not very clear-cut back then. True, the three democracies all resided in Central Europe and the three autocracies were all to be found in Central Asia – a harbinger of what was to come. But the hybrid regimes could be encountered in many different places.

Figure 4: The empirical distribution of political regime forms within the post-communist setting in 1994

Democracies	Hybrid regimes	Autocracies
Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Slovenia	Albania, Armenia, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Moldova, Mongolia, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Ukraine	Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

Figure 5: The empirical distribution of political regime forms within the post-communist setting in 1996

Democracies	Hybrid regimes	Autocracies
Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovenia	Albania, Armenia, Bulgaria, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Mongolia, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Ukraine	Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

By 1996, the empirical distribution had become much more balanced, as illustrated in figure 5. Firstly, eleven countries could be classified as hybrid regimes, seven as democracies, and six as autocracies. Secondly, this variation in political regime forms was becoming much

more subregionally (i.e., geographically) fixed. All the democracies were still to be found in Central and Eastern Europe. Also – with the sole exception of Belarus – all autocracies were Central Asian or Caucasian countries, and only Kyrgyzstan was still capable of breaking free of the autocratic air of Central Asia. But, and this is the most important change *vis-à-vis* 1992, most of the hybrid regimes were now situated between these two subregions, geographically.

Figure 6: The empirical distribution of political regime forms within the post-communist setting in 1998

Democracies	Hybrid regimes	Autocracies
Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia	Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Mongolia, Russia, Ukraine	Belarus, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

Figure 7: The empirical distribution of political regime forms within the post-communist setting in 2000

Democracies	Hybrid regimes	Autocracies
Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia	Albania, Armenia, Bulgaria, Georgia, Moldova, Mongolia, Russia, Ukraine	Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

Figure 7 depicts the situation in 2000. Notice that the 1996-picture has to a large extent been reproduced. The Central and Eastern European countries were democracies, the Central Asian republic were, together with Azerbaijan and Belarus, autocracies. And, finally, the countries situated in-between geographically were hybrid regimes. Most notably, only a single country – Bulgaria – which belonged in one of the subregions of Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia, respectively, was a hybrid regime.

Figure 8: The empirical distribution of political regime forms within the post-communist setting in 2002

Democracies	Hybrid regimes	Autocracies
Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia	Albania, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine	Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

Figure 9: The empirical distribution of political regime forms within the post-communist setting in 2004

Democracies	Hybrid regimes	Autocracies
Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Mongolia, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia	Albania, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Ukraine	Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

Figure 9 illustrates that the dynamics of political change have to some extent re-entered the picture in the latest years. First, by 2004 the very even tripartition of political regime forms is no longer as salient as before (though it is still quite salient). The class of hybrid regime is seemingly running dry. Only six out of twenty-four countries belong in it whereas eleven are democracies and seven are autocracies. Second, even though the intra-subregional divisions are still relatively stable, this box has opened up, too. Mongolia – a country that does not have any Central and Eastern European flavour to it – has moved into the class of democracy. Conversely, Russia has now become an autocracy. I will come back to the new dynamics of political change in chapter 6. Notice, however, that even in 2004 the empirical puzzle of divergent political pathways is rather clear-cut. And this puzzle is what I set out to solve in the subsequent chapters.

3. Conclusions

Based on the analysis in chapter 1, I have stressed that – to appreciate the actual gap between democracies and hybrid regimes that Larry Diamond (1999) identified but misnamed – it is necessary to conceptualise and measure 'democracy' using one dimension only. Differently said, I have objected to Diamond nomenclature, and to his associated claim about the dynamics on the electoral and the liberal component; not to his actual empirical dividing lines.

When redoing the taxonomic exercise to capture these dividing lines, i.e., when collapsing the electoral and liberal attributes and carving out thresholds along the consequent dimension, I arrive at a tripartite classification of political regime forms. The matching distinction between the three classes of 'democracy', 'hybrid regime' and 'autocracy', respectively, allows me to exhaust the dependent variable of political regime form in a way that does indeed capture the dominant political trends of the third wave of democracy – both globally and with regard to the post-communist subset.

Concerning the former setting, the classification demonstrates that a relatively even tripartition, or trichotomy, between the three regime forms has been in existence during the third wave; but that the democracies have been gaining ground in the 2000s. In short, then, Diamond's prophesy about an increasing gap is disconfirmed even when collapsing the two attributes. Concerning the latter setting, the subject of this dissertation, the early 1990s was a period of upheaval; a period in which the hybrid regimes dominated the setting. This state of disruption only lasted a few years, however. By the mid-1990s the post-communist countries were also beginning to cluster in a relative even manner in the three classes, a pattern that came into its own by the end of the decade.

Also, the variation in political regime forms had a peculiar intra-subregional flavour to it. Thus, all democracies inhabited the Central and Eastern European area, all autocracies – save Belarus – were to be found in Central Asia and the Caucasian region while the hybrid regimes were (generally speaking) situated in-between. This pattern has changed a bit in the 2000s, most notably by Mongolia becoming a democracy. Furthermore, new changes seem to be occurring at the time of writing – Russia and Kyrgyzstan are currently on the move – but it is still unclear what these renewed dynamics will mean (I return to this issue in chapter 6). However, and to conclude, from a bird's eye view the dividing lines are unmistakable, even in the latest years. This is the pattern I will seek to explain in the subsequent chapters.

Appendix 1. Counting rules for the classification of political regime forms

With a Freedom House threshold of 2 and 5.5 on the average of the electoral dimension ('political rights') and its liberal equivalent ('civil liberties'), the counting rules of my classification are very simple:

- A Freedom House score that equals or is lower than 2 on the average of 'political rights' and 'civil liberties' (i.e., the Freedom House ratings *tout court*) provides for the political regime form of 'democracy'.
- A Freedom House score that is higher than 2 but lower than 5.5 on the average of 'political rights' and 'civil liberties' provides for the political regime form of 'hybrid regime'.
- A Freedom House score that equals or is higher than 5.5 on the average of 'political rights' and 'civil liberties' provides for the political regime form of 'autocracy'.

To give three empirical examples:

- Afghanistan 1990 (PR = 7; CL = 7; average = 7)
- Algeria 1990 (PR = 4; CL = 4; average = 4)
- Argentina 1990 (PR = 1; CL = 3; average = 2)

Democracy	Hybrid regime	Autocracy
Argentina	Algeria	Afghanistan

Part II: A Cross-temporal and Cross-spatial Analysis of the Patterns of Post-communist Political Change

Chapter 3. An Actor-centred Analysis of Post-communist Political Pathways

Until now, the dissertation has only provided descriptive inference.[48] But having done so with respect to the dependent variable of the political regime form, it is time to target the issue of causal inference (for the distinction between 'descriptive inference' and 'causal inference' see King, Keohane and Verba, 1994). To reiterate, we need to answer three questions: First, why does democracy reign supreme in Central and Eastern Europe? Second, why has autocracy held its own in Central Asia? Third, why are so many of the countries situated in-between hybrid regimes?

In the subsequent chapters, I set out to identify and test relevant explanatory factors – i.e., to provide causal inference – bearing these questions in particular and the described variation on the dependent variable in general in mind. As Arend Lijphart (1971 : 683) stressed three and a half decades ago, any comparative endeavour that aims at scientific explanation,

> '[…] consists of two basic elements: (1) the establishment of general empirical relationships among two or more variables, while (2) all other variables are controlled, that is, held constant. These two elements are inseparable: one cannot be sure that a relationship is a true one unless the influence of other variables is controlled. The *ceteris paribus* condition is vital to empirical generalizations'.[49]

Lijphart's yardstick is, however, as demanding as it is necessary. The social world is riddled by factors that might be relevant but normally are not. How do we tackle this dilemma, this

[48] Needless to say, the classificatory schema arrived at in chapter 2 is itself infused by theory. Gerring (1999 : 381) has phrased it as follows: 'Classificatory frameworks (which I shall consider a species of 'theory') are particularly important since their effort is more explicitly *conceptual* than other sort of inferences'. Having said that, I have not been able to infer anything about causality so far – and that is what I seek to underline via the distinction between descriptive and causal inference.

[49] It can also be expressed in similar, but less demanding terms, as done by Sartori (1991 : 249-250): 'In order to reduce the number of conditions, to isolate them, and to specify their role, the investigator is required (i) to organize the conditions into independent, intervening and dependent variables, and (ii) to treat some causal conditions as *parameters*, parametric constants or givens (as when we invoke the *ceteris paribus* clause) that are assumed not to vary, while treating other conditions as *operative variables* that are instead allowed to vary in order to assess their influence upon the dependent variable(s) […]'. See, finally, Smelser (1976 : 153-154, 161).

helter-skelter of possible explanatory variables? While acknowledging that there is no *one* answer to that question, my preferred remedy is one that is oftentimes invoked. As Alexander George and Andrew Bennett (2005 : 30) have expressed it,

> '[t]he pragmatic (but not necessarily incomplete) approach we and other suggested is that researchers limit themselves to testing alternative theories, which individuals have proposed, rather than worrying over the infinite number of potential theories that lack any proponent'.[50]

Travelling down this road, I will now pay the theoretical literature a visit, including, first, the more particular (actor-centred) explanations that have been proposed with respect to the study of post-communism only (chapter 3) and, second, the more general (structural) explanations found under the heading of what is normally termed 'the study of regime change' (chapter 4). In doing so, I am interested in identifying factors that when present in the post-communist setting theoretically provide for the described package of electoral and liberal rights (i.e., makes for 'democracy') and when absent in the post-communist setting theoretically does not provide for the package of electoral and liberal rights (i.e., makes for 'autocracy'). In other words, I will divide each variable into a dichotomous classification on the basis of either the presence or the absence of a particular, theoretically relevant attribute.

Notice that the consequent analysis is very theory-driven. The purpose of it being so is twofold: first, to capture and contrast the competing offers on the explanatory marketplace. Second, to embed the comparative method that I will opt for at a later stage in theory; something this is very important when using simple dichotomies. This also means that I, where at all possible, will use the data and the cut-off points of the existing explanations. The objective is, to reiterate, to contrast the competing explanations and come down with a general position of my own – not to minutely criticise the causal claims staked and the data employed. This is also reflected by the fact that I dichotomise ordinal- or interval-scaled variables using cut-off points justified by the extant theories, not around means (as done by

[50] Lijphart (1971 : 690) gives a piece of advice that points in the same direction as that of George and Bennett when writing that '*Scanning* all variables is not the same as *including* all variables, of course, as long as one is on one's guard against an unrealistic and eventually self-defeating perfectionism. Comparative politics should avoid the trap to the study of international politics fell, of specifying and calling for the analysis of an exhaustive list of all variables that have any possible influence on the decision-making process'. See also Coppedge (1999 : 465-466).

e.g. Kitschelt, 1988). Concerning the use of dichotomies, a word of caution is nevertheless pertinent. As Giovanni Sartori (1976 : 147) has reminded us with respect to categorical classifications,

> '[w]hile the cases can be moved from one class to another, nonetheless a classification imputes permanence and boundedness. If no such imputation is justified, the ever-changeable rank orderings and more sensitive indexes would be more attuned to the real world'.

When I opt for the dichotomous classifications at this point (and, later on, for a typological schema), it is on the basis of the pre-eminent observation of chapter 1: that the dependent variable is characterised by a very salient tripartition which has been reproduced over time since the mid-1990s. This seems to indicate that the setting is indeed characterised by stable differences in kind, rather than unstable differences in degree and, therefore, by form rather than formlessness. However, should the empirical analysis of the independent variables show that this is only the case on the surface, i.e., in case the regularities on the dependent variable do not extend to the independent variables, it undermines the merits of the classificatory and typological schema; at least *vis-à-vis* standard statistical procedures. I will come back to this after having engaged the reality on the ground.

It is necessary to consider one thing more. As King, Keohane and Verba (1994 : 79) have emphasised, social science is burdened by what they term 'the fundamental problem of causal inference'; that '[…] we can never hope to know a causal effect for certain'. However, with systematic comparisons, we can render the existence of such a mechanism probable. Four rules pertain to this (see Agresti and Finlay, 1986 : 357).[51] First, there has to be an empirical relationship between the cause(s) and the effect(s) (i.e., we need to establish some sort of co-variation). Second, it is necessary to control for other causes (i.e., we must avoid spuriousness). Third, the cause must predate the effect (i.e., 'priority' must be observed). Fourth, the relationship must be supported by a viable theoretical argument (i.e., we need to explain *why* a relationship is to be expected).

The first two conditions are in effect those mentioned by Lijphart above. These matters must be left to the empirical analysis – and I have already indicated how I will approach

[51] Agresti and Finlay only spell out the first three criteria but the fourth is tacitly implied. See also Gerring (2001).

them. The last two conditions, however, are to be solved in the theoretical arena. Hence, these must be observed in the subsequent discussions. Differently said, an independent variable (a potential cause) will only be included in so far as it is i) linked to the dependent variable (the effect) by a convincing theoretical explanation and ii) predate the effect on the temporal dimension.

1. Two dominant actor-centred explanations in the literature on post-communism

According to my reading, the theoretical literature on political change in the post-communist setting is dominated by two, somewhat intertwined actor-centred perspectives. First, we have what I will term the 'political competition hypothesis', i.e., the assertion that the political pathways of the former communist countries were shaped by the character and outcome of the first election which, in turn, depended upon the mobilisation of oppositional forces during the transition. This assertion has, with some significant differences in emphasis, been espoused by scholars such as M. Steven Fish, Valerie Bunce[52], Michael McFaul, and Milada Anna Vachudova.

Second, we have what I will term the 'constitutional engineering hypothesis'. This proposition is linked with scholars such as M. Steven Fish and Timothy Frye[53]. The hypothesis holds that the initial constitutional choices – whether operationalised along the dimension of power distribution or parliamentary contra presidential power – is what accounts for the subsequent variation in political regime forms. Needless to say, this factor can also be construed as 'institutional' rather than actor-centred as it kicks in via the mechanism of institutional 'freezing'. I will come back to that. When I group it as actor-centred, it is to underline the fact that the institutional choices are exactly that: choices made by the actors during the transition.

Taken together, these two 'proximate' factors capture the logic of the dominant actor-centred perspectives on post-communism.[54] Furthermore, they can be construed as a coherent

[52] As I will explain later on, Valerie Bunce is a partial exception here.

[53] Note that Frye (1997) is a partial exception as he construes the chosen institutions as the explanandum, not the explanans. However, his conclusion is that the choice of presidentialism depended on i) the interests of the actors and ii) the uncertainty created by the transition – in gist, 'the electoral bargaining approach to institutional choice' – not on antecedent structural constraints. As such, his analysis is very much of the same ilk as that described in the main text.

[54] Other works that can roughly be categorised within the dominant actor-centred approach on post-communism include McFaul (2002), Vachudova (2005), Fish (2001), Bruszt (2002), Åslund (1992), Sachs (1993), Boycko,

twosome because they reflect different sides of one and the same coin: the actor-choices of the early 1990s. I will therefore confine my attention to them in this chapter. Translated into the language of independent variables, each of the two factors offers a prediction of the political pathways of the respective post-communist countries. Beyond being somewhat intertwined, they have two important postulates in common about political change in the post-communist setting. First, that the important factors shaping the outcome on the political regime form date from the transitional upheavals, not from antecedent structural factors. Second, and partly related, that these constraints were put in place by actors in a relatively voluntaristic way. The breakdown of communism simply presented a 'window of opportunity' – a critical juncture to use the vocabulary of historical institutionalism – that allowed the actors to set off on a benign (or an insidious or even pernicious) course. In what follows, I will revisit, discuss, operationalise and measure[55] the two associated variables in turn.

1.1 The political competition variable

In 1998, M. Steven Fish (1998a) published the article 'The Determinants of Economic Reform in the Post-Communist World'. The message of this article is both tangible and simple: the properties (i.e., the outcome and the character) of the initial elections after the breakdown of communism laid out the tracks of the concomitant economic reform process. Also, Fish emphasises that the initial elections were not shaped by 'deeper' factors. Rather, the outcome and character of the elections were relatively voluntaristic in that they depended upon the political elites. To quote from the article,

> 'The outcome of the initial elections certainly cannot readily be traced to a particular structural, cultural, or institutional factor. It is not out of the question that some

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Shleifer and Vishny (1995), Hellman (1998). Some of these pieces seek to explain other phenomena than democratisation per se, e.g., the dominant pattern of market making. Notice in particular that the latter four pieces touch upon a completely separate explanandum, viz., the economic reform process. However, the direction of causality – from actor-choices to political or economic outcomes – remains the same.

[55] Once again, the ladder of abstraction is the roadmap I will use to conceptualise the variables. This time around, I will be less explicit, however, as the basic logic has already been described in chapter 1. Still seeking to be a 'conscious thinker' (cf. Sartori, 1970), I do not wish to build up a too rigid and repetitive scheme of conceptualisation, operationalisation and measurement.

explanation for the outcome of the initial elections may be found in the *availability of alternative leadership* at the moment of the elections' (1998a : 77-78).

That 'founding elections' are no small matter is not a novel insight within the study of regime change (see, e.g., O'Donnell and Schmitter, 1986 : 61-63). However, most of anterior contributions which can be grouped under the headline of Transitology emphasised that either some sort of stalemate or even a win for the outgoing autocrats favours democracy whereas a clear-cut oppositional win may trigger a reaction, i.e., a democratic breakdown. As such, the Transitology-sponsored reading of the consequences of the first elections contrasts sharply with that of Fish. His perspective presents a novel contribution, then, and others have elaborated and confirmed his assertions. Let us concentrate on these elaborations, as this will allow us to capture the variable in its present appearance.

Most notable has been the support rendered by Valerie Bunce. In a very interesting overview of the economic and political occurrences after the breakdown of communism, Bunce (1999) both broadens and extends the causal chain developed by Fish. First, she notes that economic reform is the best predictor of democratisation. By logical extension, the causal chain leads from the initial elections, as described by Fish, via the economic reforms to the political regime form. To quote: '[…] just as the best predictor of democratisation is economic reform, so the best predictor of economic reform (to return to an earlier point) is the outcome of the first competitive election' (1999 : 782).

It should be noted that Fish himself indicates that the causal chain touches upon the attribute of democratisation, albeit not as the ultimate effect but rather as an intervening link. Thus, his (1998a : 59) illustration of the causal chain includes the 'Openness of the Political System' which, whatever else it may imply, definitely has the connotations of democracy (that is, if the political system is open).[56]

Nevertheless, as I will demonstrate, Bunce's extension is somewhat problematic due to the way Fish operationalises the 'initial election-variable'. Before we can make that point, it is important to note that Bunce broadens the chain, too. It is not the elections per se but rather the political competition taking place during and in the immediate aftermath of the communist breakdown that is perceived as most important. To quote:

[56] For this version of the causal chain, see also Fish (1998b).

> 'The key factor that emerged in this study was the balance of the power between the liberal opposition and the communists – a balance that determined the outcome of the first competitive election and that shaped in turn the political struggles, institutional innovations, and the public policies that followed' (1999 : 787).

As indicated in the last sentence of the quotation from Fish's article on the preceding page, he would find this conclusion congenial. One thing needs to be stressed, however. Bunce is actually promoting a 'legacies-approach' to post-communism. Instead of stressing the voluntaristic character of the events, i.e., the wide scope for action, she (1999 : 772) emphasises that '[…] the socialist past, not proximate policy choices, emerges as critical'. I will come back to Bunce's legacies-approach in chapter 7. For now, suffice to say that, at the end of the day, she (1999 : 785) leaves the legacies as a general premise and, on the concrete level, only harks back to '[…] the patterns and content of public protests during the socialist period', i.e., to the initial level of political competition. As such, her actual elaboration can be accommodated within the actor-centre logic even though her theoretical point of departure cannot.

More to the point, that the interesting variable is actually political competition, rather than the first election in itself, has found broad backing in the literature on post-communism ever since (see in particular McFaul, 2002). Most recently – and in a very thorough way – Milada Anna Vachudova (2005) has used the same point of departure to account for the initial political pathways of a group of Central and Eastern European EU-candidate countries. To do so, she divides the political competition-variable into two distinct attributes: whether the opposition won the initial elections and whether a reformed communist party was able to ensure ongoing political competition afterwards. From the mid-1990s, the EU then entered the picture and changed the relevant set of constraints – but this is an entirely different variable which I will return to at the appropriate stage.

What emerges from this overview of the literature is thus an independent variable centred on the attribute of political competition, and in particular the sub-component of whether the opposition won the initial election. Depending on the existence or inexistence of such competition, a causal chain is set in motion which ultimately results in either democracy or autocracy as the outcome on the dependent variable of the political regime form.

To capture this variable, I will only zoom in on the sub-component of the outcome of the initial elections, however. Why is that? First things first, this outcome – in essence whether the communist incumbents were displaced or not – is the most salient step in the causal chain

of both Fish, Bunce, McFaul and Vachudova, whatever else they add. Second, and more critically, Fish's quite 'thick' operationalisation of the initial election-variable touches upon a number of other properties that are much too closely linked to the dependent variable to be causally meaningful (or, at least, causally interesting).[57] Quoting him (1998a : 48) once more:

> 'Countries were scored along the following four questions in the manner indicated: 1) Who won the initial elections? (2=clear victory by reformers/noncommunists; 1=equivocal outcome; 0=clear victory by communists/custodians of the old regime); 2) Were the results of the elections quickly annulled by illegitimate means – namely, by the use or the threat of use of force? (no=1; yes=0); 3) Were the elections freely contested, meaning that they were open and multiple candidates competed for the office to be filled? (yes=1; no=0); 4) Were the elections complete or partial, meaning did they involve elections for all important offices on the national level or for only a portion of them? (complete=1; partial=0). Thus, the first question assesses 'who won' the elections; the second, third, and fourth questions capture whether the elections 'stuck'; whether they were 'open' (competitive); and whether they were 'complete''.

Note that properties 2), 3), and 4) are actually indicators of the level of democracy (at the very least on the electoral attribute) at the time of these elections. That the consequent measurement correlates with the level of democracy in the subsequent years is not exactly surprising. This is not much of a problem for Fish since his general dependent variable in this piece is economic reform (though it is arguably a problem for his more particular causal chain which, as already noted, passes through political openness: an intervening link that is very close to being tautological). But it is certainly a problem of tautology for Bunce even if she does not reflect on it. It can, however, be overcome by focusing on property 1) only which does not in and of itself connote democracy.[58]

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[57] Here, 'causally meaningful' does not refer to Kitschelt's (2003) warning about proximate factors being situated too close to the outcome, temporally. Rather, it refers to the danger of genuine tautology, i.e., of the explanans being the same as the explanandum.

[58] Although this property is, from a certain perspective, not completely independent of democracy either. One of the defining attributes of a number of conceptualisations of democracy – e.g. Huntington's (1991) so-called 'two-turnover' test – is thus that incumbents lose elections. Still, I have not treated displacement as a generic (here meaning something that is regularly repeated) attribute of the political regime form but rather as a singular instance: which diminishes the danger of tautology.

The theoretical expectation is thus that the presence of a displacement of incumbent communists at the first elections (i.e., an oppositional win) favours democracy whereas its absence (i.e., an oppositional defeat) favours autocracy. Time as a dimension of variation does not present much of a problem here. As the adjective indicates, the *initial* elections took place right after the breakdown of communism. Hence, as an independent variable, it stands prior to the dependent variable of the political regime form, which in this chapter is not measured until 1996 due to 'priority'. On the highlighted property, Fish (1998a : 50-51) scores the countries in the following manner:

> 'On the first question, most receive a 0 or a 2. In most countries, the custodians of the old regime either enjoyed clear victories or suffered clear defeats. The question is not whether genuine 'liberals' won or lost the first elections but, rather, whether *oppositionists* – be they liberals, nationalists, or some combination of the two – defeated or were defeated by custodians of the old regime […] The ambiguous cases – the ones that do not merit a score of 0 or 2 – are Macedonia, Moldova, and Slovenia. Each of these cases is scored as a 1'.

This scoring is very easily converted into a dichotomous classification. The residual category is the absence of displacement (score = 0) whereas both of the scores of 1 and 2 indicate some sort of presence of displacement. This leads me to the following operational definition: A *post-communist country experienced a displacement of communist incumbents if it obtained a score of 1 or 2 as reported by M. Steven Fish in 'The Determinants of Economic Reform*'. This makes for the subsequent classification (see appendix 1 for the numbers):

Figure 1: Displacement of communists in the first election

+ Displacement	- Displacement
Armenia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia	Albania, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Romania, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan

1.2 The constitutional engineering hypothesis

The issue of 'constitution-making' has received much attention in the preceding decades. Two reasons seem to lie behind this interest. One of them is the one emphasised by e.g. Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan (1996) in their tour de force through the issues of transition and consolidation: that the process of constitution-making leave behind a discursive legacy that may either be conciliatory or a catalyser for future conflicts.

Yet a more institutional explanation is also present in the literature: that the new constitutional arrangements – put in place by actors – become institutions that shape much of the subsequent political life. Many scholars have used the latter insight to emphasise how the new constitutions played a major role in the outcome of the politico-economic transitions in Central and Eastern Europe. Employing a 'Madisonian' perspective, László Bruszt (2002 : 58) thus asserts '[…] that what really mattered from the viewpoint of the characteristics of the state, was not the specific institutional arrangements or the actual distribution of powers among the specific institutions but the general principles shaping the structure of representation.'

Generally speaking, a structure of representation that allows a small, however legitimately elected, group to gather the reins of power in their hands can be perceived as detrimental both politically and economically. This is so because rent-seekers or would-be autocrats will only need to capture one level of the political system – the top executive – in such a situation. And having done so, no other checks will hinder consequent power abuse and transgression of rights. With respect to the post-communist setting, it has, *a fortiori*, been argued that presidentialism disfavour democracy generically. Bunce (1999 : 778) has phrased it succinctly:

> 'Presidentialism is a problem for democracy in general, because it undermines political routines, encourages wilful politicians, and, in the extreme, tolerates, if not encourages democratic breakdown. At the same time, it is a problem for the postsocialist democracies in particular, because presidentialism augments the power of the communists (by helping ensure their continuation in political office) while reinforcing the procedural irregularities and the leadership interventions so characteristic of the past'.

This is interesting, and rather than focusing on notions such as Linz and Stepan's (1996 : 83) 'consensual constitution-making', I will examine the influence of the new constitutional

arrangement via the standard distinction between a constitution that makes for a strong legislature and one that makes for a strong president.[59]

This explanation has received much attention in the literature on post-communism. Both Timothy Frye (1997) and, subsequently, M. Steven Fish (2006) have obtained some remarkable results by focusing on this attribute. In what follows, I concentrate on Fish because he deliberately targets the distinction between parliaments and presidencies (whereas Frye distinguishes between a 'power-concentrating' and a 'power-dispersing' constitution). Fish has, together with a colleague, created a Parliamentary Power Index, according to which a country receives a relatively high score if a relatively high amount of constitutional power is vested in the parliament and a relatively low score if the opposite is the case. In the article 'Stronger Legislatures, Stronger Democracies', he employs this index in the context of 25 post-communist countries.

Fish's theoretical expectation is that a high degree of parliamentary power (and hence a weak presidency) should make for democracy whereas a low degree of parliamentary power (and hence a strong presidency) should make for autocracy. This is exactly what he finds. To quote his (2006 : 5) uncompromising claim: 'The evidence shows that the presence of a powerful legislature is an unmixed blessing for democratization'. One thing needs to be added. According to Fish (2006 : 11-12), the post-communist countries have chosen constitutional systems in a more or less voluntaristic way – and the institutional constraints have then kicked in over the latest decade. This is thus very much an actor-oriented explanation of democratisation.

Fish makes an interesting case for his claim concerning the blessings of parliamentarism. The post-communist (or, better, the post-Soviet) experience is notorious for its reliance on outright presidential or at the very least semi-presidential systems. By extension, when formal power has been monopolised, it has often if not always been in the hands of the incumbent president. The flipside of this coin is that the post-communist legislatures have often been very weak. I will cling on to this fact. The expectation derived is thus that the presence of a strong legislature to balance the president will favour democracy whereas its absence will favour autocracy.

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[59] This distinction does not in itself bear upon the outcome (i.e., it is not tautological). Quoting Fish (2001 : 67): 'Only the view that strong executive power is *itself* the very definition of authoritarianism could produce the impression of endogeneity or tautology. Such a perspective would equate a *diagnostic feature* with a *hypothetically facilitating* or *sustaining condition* – a gross error, albeit one that is sometimes encountered in social science'.

But how do we move into the operational arena from here? I advocate that we simply establish a threshold of parliamentary power above which a given country can be said to have a strong legislature (i.e., to employ a general threshold making it possible to provide an overall separation between the presence and absence of this attribute). Fish's index measures the constitutional power of parliament on a scale from 0 to 1, with higher scores indicating stronger legislatures. He (2006 : 18) emphasises that a country that opted for a strong legislature is one that scored above 0.60 in the Parliamentary Power Index. To avoid any accusations of 'tailoring' the thresholds to suit my expectations, I will let this cut-off point denote the presence of the theoretical property, i.e., any country that receives a score over 0.60 can be considered to have a strong legislature. Conversely, a score equal to or lower than 0.60 makes for the absence of a strong legislature[60].

Time as a dimension of variation is a bit of a problem here since the constitutions scrutinized by the Parliamentary Power Index were inaugurated in different years, during the respective 'constitutional moments' to use Fish's term. Still, only one of them – that of Ukraine – dates from after 1995 (to be more precise, it dates from 1996). Since I do not zoom in on my dependent variable until 1996, the criteria of priority is thus observed for 23 out of 24 countries, and the one transgression is merely concomitant with the effect at the first of the three observed points in time.

One further problem needs to be tackled. Turkmenistan is not included in the survey. However, as already indicated Fish's Parliamentary Power Index is very much of the same ilk as the so-called Presidential Power Index following Timothy Frye (1997). This fact makes it possible to fill in the gap. Frye's index measures the presidential powers stipulated in the constitution of the post-communist countries in the first decade after the breakdown of communism. 27 different 'powers' are taken into consideration by the index, and a country scores either 0 (denotes that the president does not hold the power in question), 0.5 (denotes that the president is sharing a power with another body), or 1 (denotes that the president exclusively holds a given power) on each of these 27 sub-components.

Since a strong parliament means a weak president and vice-versa, it is not surprising that turning the issue upside-down does not make much of a difference.[61] More to the point, it

[60] Notice that lowering or increasing the threshold by e.g. 0.5 would make little difference. In the former case (i.e., lowering it to 0.55), no referents would be classified differently. In the latter case (i.e., increasing it to 0.65), only one referent (Georgia) would be classified differently (see the numbers in appendix 2 below).

[61] A bivariate correlation between Fish's 'Parliamentary Power Index' and Frye's 'Presidential Power Index' produces a Pearson's R of no less than .770.

means that we can borrow the position of Turkmenistan in the Presidential Power Index. Upon inspection, it turns out that Turkmenistan receives an even higher score of presidential power than the four other Central Asian countries, i.e., it is even more 'presidential' than its brethren. As all of these are, by a large margin, situated below 0.60 in Fish's index of parliamentary power, it is fair to situate Turkmenistan in this area, too.

This leads us to the following operational definition: *A country has a constitutionally strong legislature if it obtains a general score over 0.60 in the Parliamentary Power Index as reported by M. Steven Fish in 'Stronger Legislatures, Stronger Democracies':* The consequent classification appears (see the figures in appendix 2).

Figure 2: Strong legislatures in the post-communist setting

+ Strong legislature	- Strong legislature
Albania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan

1.3 The general explanatory model

On the basis of the preceding discussion of relevant actor-centred explanations, it is possible to illustrate the combination of dependent and independent variables in a table. The following picture emerges:

Table 1: An overview of the dependent and independent variables

	Country I	Country II	Country N
Displacement of communists	Absent/present	Absent/present	Absent/present
Strong legislatures	Absent/present	Absent/present	Absent/present
Political regime form	Outcome	Outcome	Outcome

In table 2, I have illustrated the actual empirical outcomes on the two independent variables. Plus (+) indicates the presence of the particular attribute covering the variable, minus (-) indicates its absence.

Table 2: An overview of the scoring on the independent variables

Cases	Displacement	Strong legislature
Albania	-	+
Armenia	+	-
Azerbaijan	-	-
Belarus	-	-
Bulgaria	-	+
Czech Republic	+	+
Estonia	+	+
Georgia	+	-
Hungary	+	+
Kazakhstan	-	-
Kyrgyzstan	+	-
Latvia	+	+
Lithuania	+	+
Moldova	+	+
Mongolia	-	+
Poland	+	+
Romania	-	+
Russia	+	-
Slovakia	+	+
Slovenia	+	+
Tajikistan	-	-
Turkmenistan	-	-
Ukraine	-	-
Uzbekistan	-	-

2. A preliminary methodological discussion

Having identified, conceptualised, operationalised and measured the dependent variable in the preceding chapter and, in this chapter, the two actor-centred independent variables deemed relevant for the purpose at hand, it is time to engage in an actual analysis of the political pathways traversed by the post-communist countries. Such a quest is not an easy one and before attacking the empirical relationships some methodological guidelines are needed.

My aim in this section is twofold. First, to discuss the merits of the comparative method in some of its various guises. Second, to arrive at a method of comparison suited for my research project. The two goals are interdependent. Most obviously, it would make little sense to employ a comparative design to which I have attached few methodological merits. But it works the other way around, too. I will argue that no *one* best way to compare exists. We are free to opt for one out of several techniques, or even to combine them – and which strategy to choose ultimately depends on the research question and the empirical setting.

2.1 Why compare?

'Inference is the process of using the facts we know to learn about facts we do not know'. This quotation, borrowed from King, Keohane and Verba (1994 : 46), brings us to the basic argument for comparing. Only by comparing can we establish a link between things that are observable and things that are not; and only thus is it reasonable to claim that we have detected a causal relationship.

But are objects of the social world really comparable? This argument is often used against the comparative method. To this we can respond that objects of the social world are never in themselves comparable but that this is beside the point. What is really compared are not the objects as such but the status of each object on a common property. Hence, everything for which a common property can be found and a status awarded for each of the objects is by and large comparable (cf. Sartori, 1991). This was done with respect to the dependent variable in chapter 2 and with respect to the independent (actor-centred) variables in this chapter.

As has been demonstrated, such an exercise only depends on the level of abstraction used to identify the common property. The question is thus not if things of the social world can be compared – they can – but whether it serves our purposes to do so. Or to paraphrase, the problem is not a logical one but one of utility and of conceptualisation. Both should be kept in mind in the subsequent discussion.

2.2 How to compare?

In the pitched methodological battle that characterises the social sciences, what is often termed the variable-oriented (aka. quantitative or large-N) approach has incumbent status. By extension, what is often termed the case-oriented (aka. qualitative or small-N) approach is, at best, a possible challenger (for the distinction between 'variable-oriented' and 'case-oriented' see Ragin, 1987). Tellingly, in his seminal article from 1971, Lijphart went so far as to assert that the statistical method is always preferable to the comparative equivalent. Only when it is

not possible to employ the former should the latter be adopted. King, Keohane and Verba's (1994) influential *Designing Social Inquiry* has recently echoed Lijphart's claim. The book is tacitly based on the same two-sided assumption that Lijphart frankly spells out: that quantitative and qualitative methods share the same underlying logic of inference but that the former is superior as a methodological tool.

This proposition is not uniformly accepted, though. In the preceding decades, a number of scholars have praised the merits of the qualitative alternative (see in particular Ragin, 1987, 2000, Brady and David Collier, 2004, and George and Bennett, 2005). This disagreement testifies to the heterogeneity of the market place of methodological ideas. Where does this leave us with the present research project in mind? The simple answer is that it is flawed to state that there is *one* best way to compare. Choosing a comparative method is exactly that: a choice between equally valid alternatives that cannot be solved on a meta-level (or as an exercise in scholastics) but only with a view to the problem and to the empirical context (cf. also Collier, Brady and Seawright, 2004 : 224).

2.3 Ordering from the comparative menu

So, what is the purpose at hand exactly? It is to explain the variation in post-communist political regime forms since the breakdown of communism. Hence, it is appropriate to apply a research design that i) is accommodating to a large-N (or at least a medium-N) analysis and ii) is accommodating to analysing across space *and* across time. The two goals are not easy to reconcile, however. For a small-N analysis is in many ways the more suitable tool when treating both space and time as dimensions of variation.

First, the pure case study is almost per definition a developmental case study (cf. Eckstein, 1975, Bartolini, 1993), i.e., a study of variation across time. As such, it is the most perfect specimen of the 'most similar system design' that I will describe below – which makes it possible to control for a wide number of possible explanatory factors when analysing cross-temporal changes (see also Coppedge, 1999 : 472). Second, such a design can be complemented by a 'most dissimilar system design' at different points in time to analyse cross-spatial variation.

These two qualitative methods of comparison hark back to John Stuart Mill (1967 [1843]). In his *A System of Logic*, he famously made a distinction between the 'method of difference' and the 'method of agreement' (and between these and two other methods which need not concern us here). Today, these methods are called the 'most similar system design' (MSSD) and the 'most dissimilar system design' (MDSD), respectively. As illustrated in

figure 3, the inferential logic of the two methods is virtually opposite. In the MSSD, the explanatory factor is identified because it is the only one that co-varies with the outcome; in the MDSD, the explanatory factor is identified because it and the outcome are the only constants.

Figure 3: The logic of MSSD and MDSD[62]

	MSSD (Difference)			MDSD (Agreement)		
	Country 1	Country 2	Country N	Country 1	Country 2	Country N
Features	A	A	A	A	D	G
	B	B	B	B	E	H
	C	C	C	C	F	I
Key explanatory factor	X	X	Not X	X	X	X
Outcome	Y	Y	Not Y	Y	Y	Y

Both methods have ardent advocates within the methodological literature. Lijphart (1971, 1975) is a partisan of the MSSD whereas Przeworski and Teune (1970 : 39)[63] favour the MDSD. What should be noted here, however, is that similar as well as dissimilar are not absolute concepts. To quote Collier (1991 : 17), '[t]his debate can be placed in perspective by recognizing that notions of 'similar' and 'different' are relative. Two cases which from one perspective are closely matched may contrast sharply from another perspective'. Hence, it is possible to employ both methods within a well-specified context, e.g. the post-communist setting.

In my case, this could be done in the following manner. First, by fixing in upon selected countries with the same outcome on the variable of political regime forms identified in chapter one, I could perform a MDSD at a certain point of time as long as the countries are rather different with regard to the majority of the operationalised explanatory variables. This would allow me to identify the factors that are critical to the respective political regime forms. Second, within a specimen of each of the three different classes, I could subsequently

[62] Table adapted from Landman (2000).

[63] Note, however, that Przeworski and Teune warn about using MDSD on an aggregated level (as is most often the case in political science). Yet others are more accommodating on this point. See, e.g., Skocpol (1984).

perform a MSSD diachronically. In this way, I would substitute different countries for one country at different points in time. The only condition for doing so is that the country has at some point moved between the classes on my dependent variable. This would allow me to check if the differences over time within one country confirm what I would have learned about the differences between countries at a given point in time.

So, why not do it this way and then generalise to the setting at large if it seems reasonable to do so (which, obviously, would depend on the criteria for selecting the countries)? The problem is that the MSSD and the MDSD are in fact not easily applicable. To quote George and Bennett (2005 : 155, 161):

> 'Mill's methods can work well in identifying underlying causal relations only under three demanding assumptions. First, the causal relation being investigated must be a deterministic regularity involving only one condition that is either necessary or sufficient for a specified outcome. Second, *all* causally relevant variables must be identified prior to the analysis (whereas Mill's methods are applicable only for explaining single-cause hypotheses). Third, cases that represent the full range of all logically and socially possible causal paths must be available for study […]. We are particularly concerned about the inability of Mill's methods to accommodate equifinality. The fact that *different* causal patterns can lead to *similar* outcomes has profound implications for efforts to develop empirical theory (or general laws)'.

While these are indeed demanding assumptions – for one thing the social world is seldom if ever deterministic (cf., e.g., Sartori, 1997 : 32)[64] – it is particularly the issue of equifinality that troubles me here. After all, social science is not natural science, and it would be possible to relax the assumptions and still elucidate the relationships in practice. But if there is one lesson that the third wave of democratisation has bequeathed to its observers, it is that countries can reach the same final destination from very different points of departure – and by traversing different routes (as e.g. emphasised by Huntington, 1991 : 38 and Schmitter, 2004 : 59). Hence, this approach, the small-N combination of MSSD and MDSD that is, is not viable, at least not for my purposes. In chapter 6, I will nevertheless return to this comparative strategy but only because the purpose at hand there (and the scope of the analysis) is less demanding.

[64] Furthermore, even if the social world is in fact deterministic, errors of measurement may obfuscate it.

Resorting to the statistical method seems to provide a suitable alternative. This is, by definition, a large-N method, and it does not demand deterministic causation. However, statistics, working with probabilities rather than pathways, has a problem with equifinality, too. Also, and more pragmatically, the low degrees of freedom resulting from 24 cases and the collinearity among many of my independent variables would – while not invalidating the use of statistics – render it somewhat problematic.

Even more importantly – and harking back to Kitschelt's (2003) ontological discussion of causality presented in the introduction – the methodological objective here is not to contrast a number of competing factors in a 'tournament of variables'. As we will see, such a strategy is uninteresting for two, related reasons. First, the striking regularities encountered in the setting means that a very large number of independent variables correlate strongly with the dependent variable (and with each other, i.e., we have massive problems of multicollinearity). Second, and in continuation of this, temporal concerns are arguably more important than statistical controls when identifying spuriousness.

This is not meant to imply that the statistical option is a complete no-go for anyone analysing the post-communist political pathways. Such an assertion would be very unfair, if not pure nonsense. My point is merely that if it is possible to find a comparative method which is better suited for the purpose at hand, one should do so. Rather than relying outright on statistical tools such as OLS-regressions, I will thus only use statistical correlations on occasion in this dissertation, i.e., I will first and foremost use them for descriptive purposes (in gist, I will only use bivariate correlations and cluster analysis).

What is really needed is a comparative model that paves the way for arriving at causal inference by the systematic use of simple logical arguments concerning time. This will make it possible to disentangle the causal mish-mash of post-communism. Luckily, such an alternative – allowing us to view the explanatory value of the competing variables from the higher ground – does in fact exist. And thus we have reached the particular comparative method that I wish to try out for size: typological theory.

2.4 Typologies and typological theory

I have already described the typological logic in chapter 1. A typology is, to reiterate, a multidimensional and conceptual classification, i.e., it is an ordering on a compound of attributes (see Bailey, 1994 for an excellent overview of the possible taxonomic exercises). Yet the pure ordering of a multi-dimensional property space is merely the descriptive face of typologies; indeed typologies are often construed as providing descriptive inference only (cf.

Bailey, 1994 : 15 and George and Bennett, 2005). Needless to say, providing descriptive inference is no small feat. As was demonstrated in chapter 1, not only can a well-crafted typology bring order into an otherwise complex universe, it can also be used to check postulates about empirical phenomena, *in casu* the existence of a gap between the electoral and liberal component of democracy. Having said that, typologies make for more than descriptive inference – they offer an anchorage for causal inference as well.

That should not come as a surprise. The one-dimensional classifications – the respective orderings, or serial operations, on attributes of which the compound is made up – normally capture a theoretically relevant distinction between the presence and absence of a given factor.[65] Indeed, the respective attributes are, as has been the case in this chapter, oftentimes derived straight from the theoretical literature. In other words, the classes tend to exhaust, in a mutually exclusive way, the possible outcomes on either a dependent or an independent variable. This means that a typology, or at least a typology formed in this way, necessarily posits something about theoretical relationships within the property space at hand. And this is the very point of departure for what is aptly termed 'typological theory'[66]. Quoting George and Bennett (2005 : 235):

> 'We define a typological theory as a theory that specifies independent variables, delineates them into the categories for which the researcher will measure the cases and their outcomes, and provides not only hypotheses on how these variables operate individually, but also contingent generalizations on how and under what conditions they behave in specified conjunctions or configurations to produce effects on specified dependent variables. We call specified conjunctions or configurations of the variables 'types''.

[65] Also, to classify is necessarily to parametrise, which – as argued at the outset of this chapter – is a required step in any method of gaining scientific knowledge. To quote Smelser (1976 : 168), '[c]lassification renders phenomena comparable by asserting that they inhere in a common context. Thus classification is a species of that operation of converting possibly operative variables into parametric constants'.

[66] Note that the distinction between descriptive typologies and typological theory is not a novel one. Sartori (1976 : 290) touches upon this very dividing line when he contrasts what he terms the '[…] mapping or charting purposes' of a classificatory or typological scheme with the '[…] causal and predictive ambitions of a taxonomy'.

In other words, typological theory must delineate the expected pathways within the compound of attributes. The capacity to do so is in fact the ultimate merit of typological theory. Such a design accommodates equifinality, without the need to rely on assumptions about deterministic causation. This is what George and Bennett (2005 : 146) emphasise, when they write that, '[…] typological theorizing allows for this kind of interaction, as it can incorporate causal mechanisms that offset one another in some contexts and complement one another in others'.

I will use the typological logic to analyse the post-communist pathways. As already pointed out, the analysis will be theory-driven as all of the independent attributes employed in this dissertation are (when present) expected to strongly favour a specific outcome on the dependent variable, to wit democracy. Contrariwise, when absent they are expected to favour a very different outcome on the dependent variable, namely autocracy.

2.5 Guidelines for typological analyses

There are basically two possible ways of using typological theory. Either one identifies an empirical type and – by working backwards to the underlying property space or compound of attributes – forms the full typology. Alternatively, one first spells out the theoretical dimensions, the respective attributes that is, and then forms the property space accordingly. Whereas the first strategy is inductive, the second is deductive (see George and Bennett, 2005 : ch. 11). When one attacks the matter inductively, the purpose at hand is to account for the full potential variation within the explanatory space. When one, on the contrary, attacks the matter at hand deductively, the aim will often be the reverse, i.e., to eliminate part of the potential variation by removing those cells (types) that are not either theoretically or empirically meaningful.

Paul Lazarsfeld (1937, and Barton, 1951), to whom we owe the introduction of the typological logic into social research, termed these procedures *substruction* and *reduction*, respectively. It will come as no surprise that reduction is very much the business I am to engage in here. After all, the treatment of independent variables carried out in this chapter was as deductive as things may possible get. On the basis of these preliminary serial operations, it is easy to form the consequent typology by unfolding the complete property space of the dependent and the independent variables. Recall that the dependent variable was conceptualised as a trichotomy of political regime forms, a classification entailing a

tripartition. Combined with the two dichotomous classifications exhausting the independent variables, the typology can be depicted in the following manner.[67]

Figure 4: The full typology[68]

	+Displacement		-Displacement	
	+Leg	-Leg	+Leg	-Leg
+Dem				
+Hyb				
+Aut				

The typology contains 12 types. I only have 24 empirical referents, and my aim will hence, if possible, be to decrease the complexity through reduction. How is this to be done? Lazarsfeld (and Barton, 1951) identified three possible strategies of reduction: functional reduction, arbitrary numerical reduction, and pragmatic reduction.[69] Functional reduction maintains the monotheticism, i.e., the unique combination of variables captured by each cell, of the formed typology while pragmatic and arbitrary reduction result in polythetic types, i.e., it is achieved by collapsing cells. I am not interested in travelling down the polythetic road, not even by using the pragmatic formula of collapsing adjacent cells, as this will obfuscate the differences in kind underpinning the classifications on the independent and dependent variables. Rather, I will rely on the functional reduction in which null cells (those without empirical referents) are deleted.[70]

[67] The respective positioning of the independent variables is coincidental. It could take many other shapes but that would not change the identity of the 96 types – only their position in the eye of the beholder.

[68] 'Dem' is shorthand for the class of 'Democracy'; 'Hyb' is shorthand for the class of 'Hybrid Regime'; 'Aut' is shorthand for the class of 'Autocracy'. Likewise, 'Displacement' is shorthand for the property of 'Displacement of communists in the first election', and 'Leg' is shorthand for the property of 'Strong legislatures in the post-communist setting'.

[69] Se also Bailey (1994 : 26-28) for an explanation of the possible strategies of reduction.

[70] George and Bennett (2005 : 249) stress that it is only types that are not 'socially possible' that should be removed. What they mean is that it is only the types that are neither found empirically nor to be expected theoretically can be deleted – rather than deleting all null cells automatically. This argument is not important for my endeavours, however. Only the diagonal types are supposed to exist and, as Bailey (1994 : 29) pertinently

3. A typological analysis of post-communist political pathways

It is time to target the combination of dependent and independent variables at three of the four points in time announced in chapter 2: 1996, 2000 and 2004 (as already argued, 1992 precedes the empirical measurement on at least one of the independent variables, viz. the constitutional engineering variable, and thus cannot be included).

Yet before reaching that far, the theoretical expectations must be clarified, i.e., I must provide hypotheses on the expected political pathways. The foundation of this work has already been laid in the discussion of the three independent variables. Recall that the justifications for including each of the two independent variables were that when the attribute used to separate the dichotomous classes was present, the variable would theoretically make for democracy, and when it was absent, the variable would theoretically make for autocracy.

Furthermore, my preliminary expectation is that the independent variables will interact strongly: to vulgarise, that good things will go together and vice-versa. More technically, I expect 'increasing returns' to characterise the relationship between the two variables. Mirroring the choices made by the actors of a particular domestic setting, the two orderings on the two variables should respond to each other. A displacement of communist incumbents will, for instance, probably facilitate the introduction of constitutional safeguards against a strong presidency. By implication, the effects of the actor-choices should quickly create either a virtuous or a vicious circle with regard to the dynamics on the dependent variable of the political regime form.

Taken together, this leads me to two expectations concerning space and one concerning time. First, democracy and autocracy are demanding constructs and it is fair to expect that the actors must either succeed (both attributes present) or fail (no attributes absent) to lead a country into these two classes. By implication, I expect very many of the cases to clump in the two polar types of cell 1 and 12, i.e., the types where i) democracy is combined with the presence of both attributes on the independent variables and ii) autocracy is combined with the absence of both attributes on the independent variables. I will refer to the former polar type as 'actor-induced democracy', as it connotes an actor-based expectation of democracy, and the latter polar type as 'actor-induced autocracy', as it connotes an actor-based expectation of autocracy. Second, the hybrid regimes should logically inhabit the

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note, '[w]hen the variables comprising the typology are highly correlated so that all cases fall into a few cells, functional reduction is accomplished simply by removing the null cells from the typology'.

intermediate types close to the diagonal[71] as one attribute will be present (otherwise autocracy is the expected outcome) but one will also be absent (otherwise democracy is the expected outcome). Third, recall that I am unable to analyse the initial years of post-communism due to temporal concerns. Bearing this in mind, I expect this picture to be visible from the first analysed year, i.e., 1996, because the 'increased returns' of the actor choices should have kicked in by then. How does the reality of post-communism conform to these expectations?

3.1 A preliminary note on the missing short-term picture of 1992

If it were possible to carry out this typological analysis in the early 1990s (recall that it is not, because of 'priority'), we would find that most of the then 23 countries did not behave as expected. This is so because of the very modest variation on the dependent variable until the mid-1990s, i.e., the fact that most countries were hybrid regimes back then.

To be more precise, very many countries would inhabit the types adjacent to the two polar types because they would either have both or none of the actor-centred attributes but would still be hybrid regimes. These adjacent types can thus be construed as 'waiting rooms' for countries traversing the respective paths to democracy and autocracy. Accordingly, I will name them 'democracy waiting room' and 'autocracy waiting room', respectively. Next, recall that by 1996 the pattern had already begun to settle down on the dependent variable. Consequently, we should expect that the types adjacent to the polar types are emptying out. Is this indeed the case?

3.2 The medium-term picture of 1996

Figure 5 illustrates the ordering of the post-communist countries on the compound of attributes in 1996. The now 24 countries (owing to the fact that Czechoslovakia was divided into its two constituent parts in the early 1990s) are situated in six different types, four of which inhabit the lands of the hybrid regimes.

[71] Obviously, the typology crafted here does not literally have a diagonal for the simple reason that it is not symmetric. This merely means that the countries are expected to clump in the various types that surround a line that can be drawn from the upper-left corner to the lower-right corner (or, more precisely, in type 1, types 6-7, and type 12).

Figure 5: The full typology with empirical referents, 1996

	+Displacement		-Displacement	
	+Leg	-Leg	+Leg	-Leg
+Dem	7			
+Hyb	2	4	4	1
+Aut				6

Does this ordering match the theoretical expectation? To a large extent, the answer is in the affirmative. The typological picture of 1996 contains few surprises. Both of the two independent variables seem to push the countries in the expected direction. The seven democracies that were in existence in 1996 all belong in the polar type of 'actor-induced democracy'. Likewise, all of the six autocracies that were in existence in 1996 belong in the opposite polar type of 'actor-induced autocracy'. In other words, not one of the thirteen non-hybrid regimes defies the theoretical expectations if we take the ordering on the dependent variable as the point of departure.

The picture does not conform 100 per cent to the expectations, however. If we focus on the orderings on the independent variables, three countries which should be democracies or autocracies are actually hybrid regimes. Thus, two countries have crossed the threshold on both attributes but are not democracies. Conversely, one country falls short on both attributes but is not an autocracy. These two groups of countries consequently inhabit types adjacent to the polar types – the respective 'waiting rooms' as I termed it – adjacent types that should not be an empirical reality according to the theoretical expectations. Let us proceed with a full functional reduction. This will reveal the proper names of the countries hidden beneath the numbers; something that may facilitate our understanding of the distribution.

Table 3: The types which have empirical referents, 1996

Cases	Displacement	Strong legislature	Political regime form
Czech Republic Estonia	+	+	Democracy

Hungary Latvia Lithuania Poland Slovenia			
Slovakia Moldova	+	+	Hybrid
Armenia Georgia Kyrgyzstan Russia	+	-	Hybrid
Albania Bulgaria Mongolia Romania	-	+	Hybrid
Ukraine	-	-	Hybrid
Azerbaijan Belarus Kazakhstan Tajikistan Turkmenistan Uzbekistan	-	-	Autocracy

The identity of the democracies and autocracies poses few surprises. Only Central and Eastern European countries are found in the polar type of 'actor-induced democracy'. Conversely, four of the five Central Asian republics plus Azerbaijan and Belarus are situated in the polar type of 'actor-induced autocracy' – no major surprises there either. The two countries that are hybrid regimes in spite of the presence of both attributes are Moldova and Slovakia. Ukraine, on the other hand, has none of the two attributes but is, nevertheless, not an autocracy. Other than that, the hybrid regimes have the expected mixed combination (i.e., combines the presence of one attribute with the absence of the other). Taken together, the empirics thus both confirm and contradict the expectations. First, they confirm them with regard to democracies, autocracies, and most of the hybrid regimes. Second, however, three

countries that should belong in the polar types actually inhabit the adjacent types. How can we interpret these inconsistencies?

One possibility is of course that the pattern is less clear-cut than expected because causal determinism is not to be found in the post-communist setting. Differently said, the variables may not explain the entire variation, not even in the longer run. This is probably part of the answer, and it will come out when scrutinizing the years of 2000 and 2004, respectively. Yet, another possibility is that the actor-based – and institutional – dynamics have not kicked in as yet (or not kicked in sufficiently). If this is indeed the nub of the matter, then some of the hybrid regimes may have embarked on a course that, in due time, will lead them to the polar types. To sum up, we would expect even more variation on the dependent variable to arise over time. Let us move one step down the temporal road to check this out.

3.3 The medium-term picture of 2000

The 2000-distribution of countries within the compound of attributes is illustrated in figure 6. The 24 countries inhabit eight different types. We now encounter even more variation on the dependent variable, first and foremost because an additional two countries have become democracies, and one more country has become an autocracy. Accordingly, the types adjacent to the polar types only contain two, rather than three countries. How may we interpret these dynamics?

Figure 6: The full typology with empirical referents, 2000

	+Displacement		-Displacement	
	+Leg	-Leg	+Leg	-Leg
+Dem	8		1	
+Hyb	1	3	3	1
+Aut		1		6

First things first, the picture is still very much in line with the theoretical expectations. In 2000, fourteen out of sixteen non-hybrid regimes are to be found in the respective polar types. Notice, however, that one country has become a democracy without having both of the

two actor-centred attributes. Likewise, one country has become an autocracy without lacking both of the attributes. A bit less disturbing, but still surprising considering the expectations, two countries that should belong in the polar types still linger in either the 'democracy waiting room' or the 'autocracy waiting room'. Let us engage in another round of functional reduction to reveal the identity of the various culprits.

Table 4: The types which have empirical referents, 2000

Cases	Displacement	Strong legislature	Political regime form
Czech Republic Estonia Hungary Latvia Lithuania Poland Slovakia Slovenia	+	+	Democracy
Romania	-	+	Democracy
Moldova	+	+	Hybrid
Armenia Georgia Russia	+	-	Hybrid
Albania Bulgaria Mongolia	-	+	Hybrid
Ukraine	-	-	Hybrid
Kyrgyzstan	+	-	Autocracy
Azerbaijan Belarus Kazakhstan Tajikistan Turkmenistan Uzbekistan	-	-	Autocracy

The polar types contain no surprises. The Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia constitute the 'actor-induced democracies'. In other words, Moldova is still the only country combining the presence of both attributes that is not a democracy. Likewise, the seven 'actor-induced autocracies' turn out to be Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Not much of a puzzle there either. Ukraine still belongs in the adjacent 'autocracy waiting room'.

What about the two countries that have crossed the threshold to either democracy or autocracy without having a clean sheet on the actor-centred attributes. The two countries turn out to be Romania (democracy) and Kyrgyzstan (autocracy). Interestingly, both of these two exceptions fall short on one and the same variable, to wit the displacement of communism. Romania did not have such initial displacement whereas Kyrgyzstan did. In the early 1990s, they conformed to this: Romania doing worst in Central and Eastern Europe whereas Kyrgyzstan was the only political star of Central Asia. But it seems that the effect was only of high importance in the shorter term – whereas the importance of having the presence or the absence of a strong legislature still holds up in 2000.

3.4 The long-term picture of 2004

Let us, finally, move to the long-term picture, viz., to 2004. Figure 7 shows that nine types are now in existence but that the two polar types still claim the membership of no less than fourteen out of 24 countries. How does the general picture square with the expectations?

Figure 7: The full typology with empirical referents, 2004

	+Displacement		-Displacement	
	+Leg	-Leg	+Leg	-Leg
+Dem	8		2	
+Hyb	1	2	2	1
+Aut		2		6

As in 2000, only two observations are to be found in a type adjacent to the polar types, i.e., in the so-called 'waiting rooms'. Out of the sixteen countries that have a clean score (a full presence or a full absence) on the attributes covering the two independent variables, only two thus defy the theoretical expectations by not belonging in the polar types. That does not mean that the classes of democracy and autocracy reveal no surprises, however. No less than four observations are either democracies (two) or autocracies (two) despite either lacking or having one attribute. Let us take a closer look at these countries through the lenses of a full functional reduction.

Table 5: The types that have empirical referents, 2004

Cases	Displacement	Strong legislature	Political regime form
Czech Republic Estonia Hungary Latvia Lithuania Poland Slovakia Slovenia	+	+	Democracy
Mongolia Bulgaria	-	+	Democracy
Moldova	+	+	Hybrid
Armenia Georgia	+	-	Hybrid
Albania Romania	-	+	Hybrid
Ukraine	-	-	Hybrid
Kyrgyzstan Russia	+	-	Autocracy
Azerbaijan Belarus Kazakhstan	-	-	Autocracy

Tajikistan Turkmenistan Uzbekistan			

With the polar types, it is business as usual. The Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia belong in the type of 'actor-induced democracy' whereas Azerbaijan, Belarus Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan belong in the opposite type of 'actor-induced autocracy'. This would probably also be the guess of most students of post-communism beforehand if they only new the numbers and not the identity of the countries. The two countries that are still situated in a 'waiting room' are Moldova and Ukraine. By now, we may conclude that they diverge from the expected pattern; either there has been errors of measurement or other constraints – not revealed by the present actor-analysis – lie behind these relatively unexpected outcomes on the political regime form.

Much more interesting are the countries that have crossed the threshold to democracy or autocracy despite lacking or having one of the attributes covering the independent variables. Bulgaria and Mongolia have both become democracies despite lacking the attribute of a displacement of communist incumbents. Conversely, Kyrgyzstan and Russia have become autocracies despite having the attribute of a displacement of communist incumbents. Where does this leave us?

In general, the theoretical expectations have been met to a large degree. The polar types now house more than half of all countries, confirming the existence of a virtuous and a vicious circle, respectively. Also, the 'waiting rooms' have (taking the missing picture of the early 1990s as an implicit frame of reference) more or less emptied out, indicating that the countries were in fact traversing the expected pathway over the period. But a more particular conclusion is also noteworthy. It turns out that the variable measuring a strong legislature is more important, causally, than the variable measuring a displacement of communism. Hence, all of the four said exceptions fall short on the latter whereas no democracy or autocracy fall short on the former. This equals using a 'most dissimilar system design' to partially disconfirm the explanatory value of the initial displacement of communist incumbents. Still, it should be noted that the 14 countries inhabiting the polar types fit the expectations connected with this variable as does a number of hybrid regimes, which is why I stress that the disconfirmation is, at most, a relative one (to elaborate, we can question the explanatory value *vis-à-vis* the variable of a strong legislature, not absolutely speaking).

This also comes out in a robustness-check, I have undertaken by treating the differences on each variable as differences of degree only (viz., using the raw-scores rather than the dichotomous scores). Using a statistical K-means analysis of the two independent structural variables and the dependent variable of political regime forms in 1996, 2000 and 2004 (specifying a 3-cluster solution), an F-test allows us to see which variables are significant in accounting for differences between the clusters.[72] The 3-cluster solution is meant to reflect the findings of the typological analysis, viz., that the countries mostly clump in the two polar types and in the centre area along the diagonal. While all three variables are significant at the 0.01-level, it turns out that 'displacement of communism' falls at the 0.005-level, and it does so during the entire period. It does not fall much short, however, and these minor differences in level of significance do not justify eliminating the variable (see appendix 3). Let us get back to the general level in order to sum up the analysis, cross-temporally as well as cross-spatially.

4. Conclusions

Viewed from the higher ground, the analysis confirms the relevance of understanding the post-communist political pathways through the prism of an actor-centred analysis. This is visible to the naked eye even though the depiction of the typologies to some extent (visually) blurs the strength of the relationship between the independent and the dependent variables. Such is the case because the employed illustration does not 'weight' the number of countries in each cell. Whether eight countries or one country inhabit a cell does not make much difference when glancing at the typology – which means that the faculty of seeing underestimates the degree to which the countries clump along the diagonal.

But this is by the way. Over time the countries have very much come to cluster in the two polar types of 'actor-induced democracy' and 'actor-induced autocracy'. If the analysis could have been carried out in 1992, few countries would be found here. Yet as early as 1996, thirteen out of 24 countries were situated in the polar types. In 2000 and 2004, the number had risen to fourteen. Differently said, in the long term almost 60 per cent of the countries end up in the polar types, thus confirming the existence of actor-induced virtuous or vicious political circles. Equally interestingly, the two adjacent types – the 'democracy waiting room' and the 'autocracy waiting room' – practically empty out over the period. In 1992,

[72] The significance levels are not that trustworthy as cluster analysis is, to reiterate, by and large a descriptive or at least explorative technique (see chapter 5, appendix 3). Still, the general picture is telling.

very many countries would have been situated in these types. But from the mid-1990s onwards, we only find a few specimens of this unexpected phenomenon. Cross-temporally, countries with either a full presence or a full absence of actor-centred properties simply leave the sphere of the hybrid regimes.

More surprisingly, the analysis shows that some countries have in fact become democracies or autocracies without a clean sheet on the attributes covering the independent variables (which means that they were 'supposed' to be hybrid regimes). Both Kyrgyzstan and Russia were autocracies in 2004 in spite of the presence of one of the two attributes, namely the initial displacement of communist incumbents. Conversely, Romania in 2000 as well as Bulgaria and Mongolia in 2004 were democracies in spite of the absence of the very same attribute. This last cluster (which in most of the years since the late 1990s would include all the three countries), in particular, indicates that at least one other pathway to democracy than that of the polar type is empirically viable (and possibly the same can be said about Kyrgyzstan's and Russia's path to autocracy). Let us use these observations to shift the attention from the empirical types to the relative causal importance of the independent variables.

Two pathways lead to the respective destinations of democracy and autocracy – that is the focal point here. With regard to the former terminus, either i) the combined presence of displacement and a strong legislature or ii) the sole presence of a strong legislature may bring about democracy. With regard to the latter destination, either i) the combined absence of displacement and a strong legislature or ii) the sole absence of a strong legislature may lead to autocracy. This indicates that a strong legislature is the most essential independent variable and, by extension, that a displacement of communist incumbents is the least essential independent variable – at least in the longer run.

So, may we simply conclude that the actor-based explanations within the literature – and in particular the constitutional engineering hypothesis – can account for the identified variation on the dependent variable of the political regime form, at least from the mid-1990s onwards? This would be as premature as it is tempting. For the actor-based explanations are encumbered with one, very important logical problem. Recall that the explanations discussed in this chapter all assume that the room for action is quite wide; they are, so to say, wearing a voluntaristic dressing. And with good reason, too. If the choices of the actors merely reflect anterior (structural) factors, then, at the end of the day, they are spurious. This is exactly where we encounter the one great challenge to the analysis of this chapter. For empirically,

the empirical referents of the various types, and in particular the polar types, seem to be very systematically dispersed across space.

Thus, and recalling a point made in the Chapter 2, throughout the period, the type of 'actor-induced democracy' solely houses Central and Eastern European countries. Likewise, the type of 'actor-induced autocracy' solely houses countries situated in the Caucasus or Central Asia, with the lone exception of Belarus. This indicates that the pathways of the actors may have been sealed beforehand – and that the status on both the three independent variables and the dependent variable merely reflects that. This critique provides the basis for considering a structural corrective to the actor-explanations discussed and tested so far. And this is the very subject of the subsequent chapter.

Appendix 1. Displacement of communists in the first election

The scores covering this attribute are derived from M. Steven Fish's article 'The Determinants of Economic Reform in the Post-Communist World'. Note that Belarus presents an exception because no elections took place. I simply [bracketed] score this as an absence of a displacement of communist incumbents. Recall the operational definition: A *post-communist country experienced a displacement of communist incumbents if it obtained a score of 1 or 2 as reported by M. Steven Fish in 'The Determinants of Economic Reform*'.

Table A: The scoring and ordering on 'Displacement of communists in the first election'

Country	Fish's index	'Displacement'
Albania	0	-
Armenia	2	+
Azerbaijan	0	-
Belarus	[0]	-
Bulgaria	0	-
Czech Republic	2	+
Estonia	2	+
Georgia	2	+
Hungary	2	+
Kazakhstan	0	-
Kyrgyzstan	2	+
Latvia	2	+
Lithuania	2	+
Moldova	1	+
Mongolia	0	-
Poland	2	+
Romania	0	-
Russia	2	+
Slovakia	2	+
Slovenia	1	+
Tajikistan	0	-
Turkmenistan	0	-
Ukraine	0	-

Uzbekistan	0	-

Appendix 2. Strong legislatures

The scores covering this attribute are derived from M. Steven Fish's article 'Stronger Legislatures, Stronger Democracies'. Recall the operational definition: *A country has a constitutionally strong legislature if it obtains a general score over 0.60 in the Parliamentary Power Index as reported by M. Steven Fish in 'Stronger Legislatures, Stronger Democracies':* I have, on behalf of the considerations stated in the chapter, granted Turkmenistan a [bracketed] score of 0.35, constituting the average of the four other Central Asian republics.

Table B: The scoring and ordering on the 'Strong legislatures'

Country	Parliamentary Powers Index	'Strong legislature'
Albania	.75	+
Armenia	.53	-
Azerbaijan	.44	-
Belarus	.28	-
Bulgaria	.78	+
Czech Republic	.78	+
Estonia	.75	+
Georgia	.59	-
Hungary	.69	+
Kazakhstan	.31	-
Kyrgyzstan	.41	-
Latvia	.84	+
Lithuania	.72	+
Moldova	.72	+
Mongolia	.81	+
Poland	.66	+
Romania	.72	+
Russia	.44	-
Slovakia	.72	+
Slovenia	.78	+
Tajikistan	.41	-
Turkmenistan	[.35]	-

Ukraine	.50	-
Uzbekistan	.28	-

Appendix 3. K-means cluster analysis

F-test statistics for the K-means cluster analysis (three-cluster solution specified). See Chapter 5, appendix 3 for the technical description of the procedure.

Table B: ANOVA (1996)

	Cluster		Error		F	Sig.
	Mean Square	df	Mean Square	df		
FirstElec	4,013	2	,665	21	6,030	,009
StrLeg	,313	2	,008	21	37,273	,000
FH1996	36,467	2	,281	21	129,797	,000

Table C: ANOVA (2000)

	Cluster		Error		F	Sig.
	Mean Square	df	Mean Square	df		
FirstElec	4,000	2	,667	21	6,000	,009
StrLeg	,337	2	,006	21	55,454	,000
FH2000	39,641	2	,327	21	121,084	,000

Table D: ANOVA (2004)

	Cluster		Error		F	Sig.
	Mean Square	df	Mean Square	df		
FirstElec	4,125	2	,655	21	6,300	,007
StrLeg	,344	2	,005	21	62,849	,000
FH2004	44,927	2	,584	21	76,887	,000

Chapter 4. A Structural Analysis of Post-Communist Political Pathways

As mentioned in the introduction, one of the often-heard criticisms of the actor-centred approach normally termed 'Transitology' is that the sustainability of democracy is very much linked to the structural constraints (see, e.g., Acemoglu and Robinson, 2006 : 77). Even if the actors have a lot of proximate influence during upheavals, the longer-term prospects are thus likely to be shaped by the structures. This is a valid point but to some extent it misses the mark. O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986), in particular, were first and foremost preoccupied with the transitional 'black box', hence the name 'Transitology'. Their aim was to probe into this 'window of opportunity' surrounding the breakdown of an authoritarian regime. And here, they stressed, the choices of the actors were of vital importance. The future outcome of this transition, on the contrary, was perceived as nebulous.[73]

Having said that, the true test of any actor-centred perspective is this: whether or not the actions may have critical[74] long-term effects. Differently said, if the actors cannot break an antecedent structural pattern thus sending their community off on a relatively more benign (or more pernicious) political or economic track, then the transitional upheavals do not really matter; which means that the perspective has not proved its worth. This goes for Transitology in spite of the professed concern about the upheavals only. And it is – *a fortiori* – even more the case for the two actor-centred perspectives discussed and analysed in the preceding chapter. After all, the emphasis on initial elections and constitutional engineering include claims concerning long-term political effects.

But has the scope for actions really been wide in the post-communist setting? As already touched upon, the three operationalised regime forms seem to be systematically dispersed across the setting, at least from the mid-1990s onwards. With the sole exception of Mongolia, democracy has not made inroads outside of Central and Eastern Europe – which means that it is reasonable to doubt whether this outcome has really been actor-induced. Conversely, the fact that autocracy is the common coin in all of Central Asia implies that this outcome, too, has to some extent been given in advance. These geographical observations may seem trivial, and, to be sure, the lesson they hold is a simple one. But simple lessons are oftentimes

[73] To be sure, many of those following in the footsteps of O'Donnell and Schmitter did indeed hint that the actor-focus was relevant for longer-term developments as well.

[74] The adjective 'critical' is meant to imply that the actions can create what historical institutionalists normally term 'critical juncture' i.e., that the actors – via their choices – can break the structural constraints.

important. In gist, the relatively open political highway of the early 1990s soon divided itself into three distinct paths. From the mid-1990s onwards, it seems difficult – or at least counter-intuitive – to attribute this systematic geographical variation to the contingent choices of actors during political upheavals.

The alternative explanation that comes to mind is that the structural constraints are to blame. If we assume, and it would be very heroic not to do so, that the commonalities between the structural factors are larger within each of the three geographical clusters (i.e., within what I have termed the subregions) than between them, then this structural variation is concomitant with that on the dependent variable of the political regime form. To paraphrase, it seems reasonable to expect that structural factors lie behind at least the longer-term empirical trichotomy of political regime forms that I identified in chapter 2. In an actor-centred analysis of post-communist political diversity, Michael McFaul (2002 : 238) has (almost) admitted as much. To quote:

> 'The strong correlation between geography and regime type suggests that deeper structural variables might explain the regime variances without the need for a careful accounting of balances of power and ideologies at the time of transition. Geography, as well as economic development, history, culture, prior regime type, and the ideological orientation of enemies most certainly influenced the particular balances of power and ideologies that produced democracy and dictatorship in the postcommunist world. Future research must seek to explain these transitional balances of power'.

This dissertation deliberately seeks to provide such future research on the structural roots of the actor-choices during the transition. With this in mind, I will only consider the structural independent variables found within the explanatory field in this chapter. Paraphrasing Lipset's famous article, it is the 'structural requisites of democracy' that interest me here.

1. Four structural factors in the study of regime change

Structural factors normally operate on a more abstract level than their actor-centred equivalents because their extension is wider. Hence, it makes sense to identify them within the general study of regime change. According to my reading of the theoretical literature, Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan's *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation* from 1996 has captured most of the explanatory market place within the study of regime change.

Needless to say, other factors than those of Linz and Stepan have been pointed to,[75] but the objective of this chapter is merely to identify a general set of relevant, structural factors. To elaborate, the aim is not to find the 'smoking gun' – *the* independent variable – of post-communist democratisations. Rather, the aim is to examine whether the structural factors, as a whole, can account for the striking post-communist regularities on the dependent variable of the political regime form that I have described in chapter 2.

Linz and Stepan's point of departure is that structures – or context as they term it – create a modified path-dependency. The term 'modified' suggests that a pernicious path can be broken if the actors are sufficiently committed to secure a democratic outcome (and vice-versa with a benign path). In this way, they are able to include all of the three traditional perspectives found within the study of regime change – the functional school, the genetic school and the transnational school (cf. Pridham, 2000 : 5-12) – while emphasising the choices of actors as the 'ultimate' independent variable. These otherwise interesting considerations are superfluous in the present case, however, since my objective is solely to choose and pick the structural factors on offer in the literature. The merit of Linz and Stepan's explanatory edifice is exactly its inclusiveness in this regard. Seven in all, their independent variables can be captured by the following tripartition.

Figure 1: Linz and Stepan's independent variables of democracy

Macro variables	Stateness
	The character of the prior regime form
Context-centred variables	International influences
	The political economy of legitimacy and coercion
	The constitution-making environment
Actor-centred variables	The leadership base of the prior regime
	Who initiates and controls the transition?

As already indicated, I exclude the two actor-centred variables of 'The leadership base of the prior regime' and 'Who initiates and controls the transition?' in order to focus on the

[75] 'Religion' is one of the more prominent. However, as Kitschelt (2003 : 65) has convincingly argued as an independent variable religious doctrines suffers from being too 'deep' because it is not supported by a convincing causal mechanism. Also, to a large extent it discriminates in a like manner as that I will arrive at with regard to the variable of the 'prior regime form' below.

structural factors only (notice, further, that the former variable is more or less a constant in the post-communist setting[76] whereas the latter is to a large extent covered by the 'initial election-variable' of chapter 3). By the same token, the 'constitution-making environment' has to go. Even though Linz and Stepan group this as a 'context-centred variable', it still reflects the choices of actors – which is why I included it in chapter 3.

All of the four remaining variables are, on the contrary, structural. Let us look carefully at them in order to i) conceptualise, ii) operationalise and iii) measure them. In doing so, I will once again observe, first, the conceptual logic of the ladder of abstraction, second, 'priority', i.e., I will require that the cause predates the effect, and third, the theoretical test, i.e., whether the cause can be linked to the effect theoretically. In short, I will follow the same procedure as I did in the preceding chapter.

1.1 Stateness

To Linz and Stepan (1996 : 16), the variable of 'stateness' targets the relationship between state, nation(s) and democratisation. The existence of a sovereign state is a prerequisite for democracy while the existence of competing national discourses within the territory makes democratisation more difficult.

The former insight is self-evident and not too interesting for my purposes. To be sure, some of my cases, e.g. Moldova and Georgia, have been tormented by civil strife. Yet – as I have excluded the region with the most war torn states, viz. ex-Yugoslavia – it would not be fair to say that a sovereign state is lacking in my 24 cases. Had this indeed been the case, I would have been unable to group the countries on the dependent variable as one of the conceptual attributes of the political regime form (the liberal one) explicitly emphasised the existence of a state. In other words, seen from the higher ground the pure 'state' variable is a constant and need not worry us here. The latter insight is much more pertinent. It has an impressive pedigree within modern political thought and was once forcefully formulated by John Stuart Mill who went to the very border of determinism when he wrote that,

> '[f]ree institutions are next to impossible in a country made up of different nationalities. Among a people without fellow-feeling, especially if they read and speak different

[76] Linz and Stepan's (1996) property space on this variable is exhausted by the respective types of 'hierarchical military', 'nonhierarchical military', 'civilian elite' and 'sultanistic elites'. With Poland and Romania as partial exceptions, little variation is found within the post-communist setting as the communist party held a ubiquitous presence and status.

languages, the united public opinion necessary to the workings of representative government cannot be.'

Mill took for granted that nationality is a given; a primordial rather than a constructed entity to use the jargon of today. That, however, is not the way contemporary scholars within the study of regime change comprehend 'stateness'. Reaching back at least to Rustow (1970)[77] – and subsequently boosted by Benedict Anderson's (1983) modern classic on *Imagined Communities* – students of democratisations have stressed that what is needed is a consensus of whom should be included into the citizenry, the existence of 'national unity' to use Rustow's own wording.

Contemporary scholars are right to stress identity instead of primordial pedigree. Many a modern democracy has, after all, consolidated in spite of housing several nationalities (cf., e.g., Lijphart, 1984). Yet most of these successful democracies have one thing in common: they have spent decades, if not centuries, creating the societal consensus needed – and they have often had the privilege of building upon a legacy of settled statehood and the lineages of a liberal constitutional system.

Young democracies, as are all those included in this dissertation, do not have such benign heritage. They must build consensus over identity concomitant with establishing statehood and departing from autocracy. In these circumstances, democracy may in effect increase the salience of the ethno-linguistic cleavages as political elites play the 'ethnic card'. This also seems to be Linz and Stepan's reading of the variable. To quote from their (1996 : 27) account:

'A hypothesis that derives from this therefore is that the greater the percentage of people in a given territory who feel that they do not want to be members of that territorial unit, however it may be reconstituted, the more difficult it will be to consolidate a single democracy within that unit'.

In accordance with the reigning body of theory, Linz and Stepan are quick to stress that the presence of multiple nationalities and languages is a political problem that can be overcome by the actors. Nevertheless, it offers a path strewn with obstacles. To capture these obstacles

[77] To Rustow, 'national unity' was a background (i.e., a necessary) condition for any successful transition to democracy.

analytically, it is pertinent to change the level of abstraction by moving from the very general question of 'stateness' to the more particular question of 'ethno-linguistic' homogeneity. Homogeneity here connotes that one group constitutes what may be termed a 'qualitative majority'[78] on both the ethnic and the linguistic attribute. The theoretical expectation is that homogeneity favours democracy whereas its opposite number, i.e., fragmentation, favours autocracy.

But how do we operationalise the variable of *ethno-linguistic homogeneity*? When is the attribute present, and when is it absent? What I will do is to rely on the so-called 'Ethnic Diversity Score' published by Country Indicators for Foreign Policy (CIFP, 2006). This score is based on the number of ethnic groups in a country weighted by the fraction of the population each group represents, i.e., in determining the degree of ethnic diversity, it measures both the number and the sizes of ethnic groups. The index is on a nine point scale: 1 denotes 'lowest diversity' and 9 denotes 'highest diversity'. Which thresholds does it make sense to choose in our case? – and why? I have not been able to find a standard threshold in the theoretical literature. Clearly, however, the connotations of homogeneity mean that there must be a situation of striking predominance (of one group). The CIFP scores are, to a large extent, based on the CIA World Factbook. A score of 4 or lower more or less corresponds to a situation in which one group can be said to make up what I have already termed a 'qualitative majority', i.e., more than two-thirds of the population.[79] Differently said, it denotes a situation where the majority is, by far, peerless. This is therefore the threshold I will apply.

Logically, the figures should capture the situation at the outset of the transition, i.e., in 1989-1991, at the latest. Time as a dimension of variation is, however, of little concern to us here since the ethno-linguistic composition is not characterised by short-term changes, at least not in the countries I look at. The CIFP figures reflect the situation in the 1990s and that should do. Thus, the operational definition I arrive at is the following: *A post-communist country is ethno-linguistically homogenous if it obtains a score of 4 or lower as reported by the CIFP's 'Ethnic Diversity Score'*. This makes for the subsequent classification (see appendix 1 for the figures):

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[78] I use the term 'qualitative majority' simply to stipulate that a simple majority does not make for 'homogeneity'. Since the term normally connotes 'uniformity' or at least 'predominance', the requirement must be that the majority is a very clear one, *in casu* around two-thirds of the total.

[79] My own calculation based on the 'Ethnic Diversity Score' and the 'CIA World Factbook Scores'.

Figure 2: Ethno-linguistic homogeneity

+ Ethno-linguistic homogeneity	- Ethno-linguistic homogeneity
Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia	Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan

1.2 The character of the prior regime form

To capture the 'the character of the prior regime form'-variable, Linz and Stepan (1996 : 38-66) craft a five-fold typology consisting of the respective types of 'democratic', 'authoritarian', 'totalitarian', 'post-totalitarian' and 'sultanistic'. Within the communist setting – in the late 1980s – only Poland, Romania and Albania fell in any other category than the 'post-totalitarian' one, namely the respective types of 'authoritarian' and 'sultanistic'. At first sight, this factor is thus more of a constant than a variable. Furthermore, the very limited variation on this independent variable does not go hand-in-hand with any systematic variation on the dependent variable of the political regime form.[80]

However, Linz and Stepan also emphasise that the 'post-totalitarian' type can be further divided into the sub-types of 'early', 'frozen' and 'mature' – and that these distinctions, too, hold explanatory leverage. This means that the variable cannot be parameterised in the post-communist setting. Two problems emerge, however. First, it is somewhat difficult to categorise on the two levels of the five-fold typology and the three sub-types. The complexity of such an ordering is very salient, and it is not really possible to capture these distinctions along a single dimension, i.e., to classify, in this instance. In fact, Linz and Stepan's typological exercise is so multi-dimensional that it cannot provide the pivot for a dichotomous classification – at least not without some very arbitrary footwork. Second, Linz and Stepan do not make any distinction between the 15 former Soviet states; and that is quite problematic considering the political heterogeneity of the post-Soviet setting (cf. chapter 2).

Others have tackled this variable in a more one-dimensional way, however, while stressing the differences within the Soviet space. In a very interesting analysis of post-

[80] The political heritage of being 'sultanistic' is theoretically supposed to leave a country worse of than that of being 'post-totalitarian'. However, as we have seen in chapter 2, Romania successfully made the transition to 'democracy' in the 1990s, and 'Albania' did not revert to the class of 'autocracies'. Hence, in the longer run the influence of the sultanistic point of departure seems, at best, to be indecisive.

communist regime change, Herbert Kitschelt (1999) unfolds what he terms 'communist legacies'. To quote,

> 'After the demise of the German Democratic Republic, the only surviving polity with a clearly bureaucratic-authoritarian legacy is the Czech Republic (score = 3). Polities with a background of national-accommodative communism are more numerous: Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, and the three Baltic states (score = 2). Patrimonial communist regimes yielding less favorable conditions for democracy prevailed in Southeastern Europe and the core areas of the former Soviet Union, Albania, Belarus, Bulgaria, Georgia, Macedonia, Romania, Russia, and the Ukraine (score = 1). The remaining fission products of the Former Soviet Union belonged to a colonial periphery with next to no articulation of civil society before the advent of communism and fully patrimonial administrative relations that jointly produce the dimmest opportunities for democratic regime entrenchment' (1999 : 32).

The distinctions between the respective legacies of i) bureaucratic-authoritarian, ii) national-accommodative, iii) patrimonial communism and iv) colonial periphery build upon the two distinctive properties of 'bureaucratic state legacies' and 'the balance of power between communists and their challengers'. Both of these properties can be traced to the pre-communist era but Kitschelt zealously emphasises that they have been reproduced during communism, hence the tag 'communist legacies'. The former legacy – when present – paved the way for a pattern of bureaucratic professionalisation during communism which proved valuable by impeding rent-seeking after the breakdowns of communism in 1989-1991. The latter legacy – when present – made for a lingering oppositional civil society which came into its own after 1989-1991, thus ensuring immediate political opposition to the communist incumbents.

More particularly, both 'bureaucratic-authoritarian' and 'national-accommodative' communism made for either a virtual breakdown or a negotiated transition in 1989-1991 because of the strength of the opposition. Contrariwise, 'patrimonial communism' and 'colonial periphery' made for either pre-emptive reforms or mere continuity because the communist incumbents faced such weak opposition. Kitschelt's explanatory logic is thus one of path dependency, and the two properties of 'bureaucratic state legacies' and 'the balance of power between communists and their challengers' aptly capture the character of the prior regime type. Also, to a large extent they go hand in hand – Kitschelt adds them up precisely

because of their collinearity – and it seems reasonable to construe these two attributes as one dimension. Hence, I will use Kitschelt's ordering as a pivot for the subsequent classification.

What I have done here is, once again, to descend the ladder of abstraction – this time around from the prior regime form in general to the actual prior regime forms of the communist setting. But how do we make a distinction between two classes in this case? Theoretically, the dividing line is that which separates a beneficial communist legacy (i.e., a beneficial prior regime form) from its opposite. In other words, the expectation is that the presence of a beneficial communist legacy will facilitate democracy whereas its absence will facilitate autocracy. A beneficial legacy connotes a situation in which the bureaucratic apparatus and the societal opposition to the communist party ensured that democrats had a base to mobilise after the breakdown of communism.

According to Kitschelt's analysis, the corresponding cut-off point is that between 'bureaucratic-authoritarian' or 'national-accommodative', on the one hand, and 'patrimonial communism' or 'colonial periphery' on the other. Both of the two former inheritances theoretically favour democracy whereas both of the two latter inheritances favour autocracy. As the analysis is to be theory-driven, I will cling on to this interpretation. Notice also that the legacy of the former regime form by definition predates the events of post-communism, i.e., as cause it predates the effect. This is thus the threshold that separates the two classes, and it brings us to the following operational definition: A *post-communist country has a beneficial communist legacy if it achieves a score of 2 or 3 as reported by Herbert Kitschelt in 'Accounting for Outcomes of Post-Communist Regime Change'*. That makes for the subsequent classification (see appendix 2 for the figures):

Figure 3: Beneficial communist legacy

+ Beneficial communist legacy	- Beneficial communist legacy
Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia	Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Mongolia, Romania, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan

1.3 International influences

In Linz and Stepan's vein of thinking, the 'international influences' spring from three sources: foreign policies, zeitgeist and diffusion. That international influences are truly important for regime change is, somewhat surprisingly, to a certain extent a novel idea. Or, to be more precise, it was purposely placed in the shadow of the internal influences by what I have termed Transitology. Linz (1978) stresses this regarding breakdown of democracy, and eight years later O'Donnell and Schmitter aired the same opinion concerning transitions from authoritarian rule. To quote their (1986 : 19) famous and uncompromising claim: 'More precisely, we assert that there is no transition whose beginning is not a consequence – direct or indirect – of important divisions within the authoritarian regime itself, principally along the fluctuating cleavage between hard-liners and soft-liners'.

That understanding was altered (for an illustration of this change in perception see, e.g., Schmitter, 1996 : 5), however, when communism collapsed in 1989-1991. First and foremost, the removal of the external Soviet pressure was something that could not be ignored as an (negative[81]) explanatory factor. But secondly, once democratisation began, it spread like wildfire.

So, what is the prevailing claim of the theoretical literature after this sharp turn? Many of the contemporary articles on the external context basically identify a form of liberal discursive hegemony as the focal point (e.g. Levitsky and Way, 2002 : 61), the *Zeitgeist* mentioned by Linz and Stepan. In effect, the claim most often stated is a two-sided one. On the one hand, the liberal hegemony means that virtually no country in the world of today can completely ignore the pressure for democratisation. On the other hand, it is underlined that the responses often take the form of lip service to democratisation rather than genuine reforming (cf. Gryzmala-Busse and Luong, 2002 : 536). Unfortunately, a glance at the empirical context demonstrates that the explanation is burdened by a logical problem. Global liberal hegemony should, being hegemonic, affect all the countries within the chosen setting. Yet the countries in my post-communist cluster have gone their separate ways within the latest decade. In other words, liberal hegemony cannot account for the differences.[82]

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[81] By 'negative', I mean to imply that the Brechnev doctrine was a hindrance for democratisation and, as such, its removal a necessary condition for regime change, yet that its removal did not positively facilitate democracy. Differently said, it was a barrier that had to be removed and nothing else.

[82] But see Levitsky and Way (2005) for an attempt to solve this by introducing the distinction between Western leverage and linkage to the West.

At the end of the day, only one external factor seems to hold clear, explanatory power: EU-conditionality (cf. Vachudova, 2005). Needless to say, this point is especially relevant for the post-communist experience. Instead of assuming that liberal hegemony will have consequences for all post-communist countries, my claim is that this is only so if a given country has the prospect of becoming an EU-member state. In other words, I will emphasise a particular property underpinning the factor that Linz and Stepan term 'foreign policies'. In describing this factor, they (1996 : 74) are keen to stress the power a regional hegemony such as the EU can yield by designing a package of incentives and disincentives that supports democracy over autocracy – and thus concur with the assertion made above.

To elaborate, I have argued that, in the post-communist setting, it makes sense to ignore variables such as '*Zeitgeist*' and diffusion and descend the ladder of abstraction from 'foreign policies' to 'the prospects of EU-membership' to cover the independent variable of international influences. In chapter 5, I will return to 'diffusion' which is obviously also an aspect of international influences but which is not really a structural variable. Yet, in this chapter 'prospects of EU-membership' is simply what the variable of international influences connotes. My expectation is that the presence of such prospects, that is, the political dependence on the EU, favours democracy whereas its absence favours autocracy.

In operationalising this variable, some difficulties relating to time as a dimension of variation have to be solved. Recall that the structural variables are to be measured at a point in time predating the occurrences of 1992 and onwards. As Milada Anna Vachudova (2005) has emphasised, the EU's leverage over Central and Eastern Europe was 'passive' until the actual membership negotiations came to the fore in the mid-1990s – from then on it became 'active'. Passive leverage refers to the general attraction of potential EU membership whereas active leverage refers to the deliberate conditionality exercised in the EU's pre-accession process. Passive leverage is thus a kind of contextual variable (i.e., a scope condition). It is based on the political and economic benefits of membership and on the reverse side of the coin, i.e., the cost of exclusion. The active leverage is premised upon these incentives. In the 1990s, the political elites in the candidate countries were thus willing to accept very significant direct conditionality because the fruits of membership were so very overwhelming. Yet such 'direct' leverage only became possible after the EU committed itself to actual accession negotiations.

Because of 'priority', it is the passive leverage I seek to capture here, i.e., it is the general attractiveness of future EU-membership that is the crux of the matter. In the Conclusions, I will briefly come back to the issue of 'active leverage' after the mid-1990s. But notice that

passive leverage was important from day 1 of post-communism. At the most general level, the distinction we can make here is quite simple. As Vachudova (2005 : 9) emphasise, all countries geographically situated in Europe – with the sole exception of the post-Soviet countries not situated along the Baltic coast – have had hopes for EU-membership. In order to avoid the bias of a more particular judgment about the actual outlook of the various countries, I will order the countries using this general distinction. Hence we operationalise: *A country had prospects for EU-membership after the breakdown of communism if it was situated in Europe geographically, and if it was not Belarus, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine or part of the Caucasus*.

Figure 4: Prospects for EU-membership after the breakdown of communism

+ Prospects for EU-membership	- Prospects for EU-membership
Albania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Mongolia, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan

1.4 The political economy of legitimacy and coercion

Linz and Stepan's reading of this variable targets the relationship between socio-economic efficacy and political legitimacy. This is but the contemporary acknowledgment of Lipset's (1959a, 1959b : 48-50) seminal assertion that '[t]he more well-to-do a nation, the greater the chances that it will sustain democracy'. Lipset's thesis has been at the receiving end of a lot of criticism since its conception in the late 1950s; not least because many of those borrowing his perspective attempted to transform it into a law-like statement valid across time and space. The current version of the argument has returned to the probabilistic or even just possibilistic gestation. Termed neo-modernisation theory, it holds that a country may initiate a transition to democracy at any income level – but that once initiated, the future prospects are very much dependent upon the level of economic development.[83] To paraphrase, a positive economic development does not create democracy but it sustains democracy.

[83] What I have here termed 'neo-modernisation theory' is first and foremost represented by Przeworski and Limongi (1997). But see Epstein, Bates, Goldstone, Kristensen and O'Hallran (2006) for a dissenting view (i.e., one reconfirming the direct relationship between socio-economic development and democratisation).

The mechanism most often used to underpin this relationship is that socio-economic development fosters education which, in turn, brings about political tolerance. Be that as it may, it is also possible to coin the relationship between socio-economic development and democratisation in terms of naked self-interest. As Przeworski (2004 : 137) notes '[a]bove some income level, in turn, losers accept an electoral defeat even when they have no chance to win in the future, simply because even permanent losers have too much to risk in turning against democracy'. Lipset (1959b : 66) himself touched upon this understanding in his famous work when he wrote that:

> 'If there is enough wealth in the country so that it does not make too much difference whether some redistribution takes place, it is easier to accept the idea that it does not matter greatly which side is in power. But if loss of office means serious losses for major power groups, they will seek to retain or secure office by any means available'.

This latter understanding (which is also emphasized by Przeworski and Limongi, 1997 : 165-166) is very compelling with regard to the post-communist experience. In many of the post-communist countries, politics is first and foremost about power and the spoils of power. Hence, rather than focusing on human development characteristics such as education, I will simply look at the level of economic wealth.

One thing needs to be discussed, however. As Linz and Stepan also argue, it is not only the level of wealth that is important theoretically, it is also the economic trends that matter. To quote them (1996 : 80), '[…] a country that is experiencing positive growth, other things being equal, has a better chance to consolidate democracy than a country that is experiencing negative growth'.

Differently said, the vicissitudes of the economic situation may also impact on the tolerance of the political actors. Indeed, the so-called neo-modernization theory mentioned above – associated with Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi – emphasises two attributes, one being the absolute level of development, the other being the relative economic trends. The argument is, in a nutshell, that the presence of both a high absolute level of development and the presence of positive economic trends bolster democracy whereas the absence of both of these facilitates breakdown of democracy.

It does seem compelling to include both attributes in the classification of this variable. But notice that the post-communist experience is remarkably out of sync with the global dynamics on this point. In the early 1990s virtually all post-communist countries were

pestered by economic declines of truly outstanding proportions. To quote Bela Greskovits (1998 : 5):

> 'Against the background of a transformational recession […] deeper and longer than the Great Depression had been in Western Europe, and in the context of sweeping neoliberal reforms, none of the predicted catastrophic political outcomes have so far materialized in the East. Protest against the dire economic conditions has been mostly sporadic, nonviolent, or insignificant'.

And not only did the citizens of Central and Eastern Europe remain sanguine during this precipitous economic decline, democracy in fact made significant headway in very many of these countries during the hardships. The post-communist experience simply seems to be *sui generis* on this point, at least when placing one's faith in Przeworski and Limongi's general conclusions. Or to phrase it in comparative terms: negative economic trends were, first, a constant throughout the first half of the 1990s and, second, did not facilitate breakdown as expected. It is thus fair to exclude this attribute from the investigation.

The same can be said about the presently so popular focus on economic equality as a condition of successful democratisation.[84] The post-communist experience is very hard to reconcile with this emphasis on the pernicious political effects of rising inequality. Under communism, the Central and Eastern European countries reached very high levels of economic equality. But after the advent of democracy, inequality has risen dramatically. A few examples should suffice. In Estonia, the Gini-coefficient (measured as the distribution of income) rose from a level of 28 in 1989 to 39 in 2000; in Latvia, from 26 to 33; in Lithuania, from 26 to 36; in Poland, from 28 to 35; in the Czech Republic, from 20 to 24; in Hungary, from 23 to 26; and in Romania from 24 to 31 (see Møller, 2006b). And these very uniform trends have occurred in spite of the impressive democratic credentials of the said countries.

The absolute level of economic development is, on the contrary, a variable across the setting. Also, since political upheavals were ubiquitous in 1989-91, the absolute level would, according to the theory, impact directly upon the likelihood of locking in a democratic path. To capture this attribute, I therefore move up the ladder of abstraction – departing from Linz and Stepan's fine-grained focus on economic legitimacy – and focus on the aggregate level

[84] See Acemoglu and Robinson (2003) and Boix (2003) for two recent attempts to explain the global dynamics of democratisation with reference to the dynamics of socio-economic distribution.

of economic development. This is, in a nutshell, what the socio-economic variable connotes here (which equals saying that it is not really a 'socio-economic' but only an 'economic' variable). My expectation is that the presence of a (relatively) *high level of economic development* at the outset of the political upheavals of 1989-91 facilitates democracy whereas its absence facilitates breakdown of democracy, i.e., makes for a movement towards autocracy. By focusing on the period until 1991, priority is observed as 1992 is the first year in which I include the dependent variable. There is one *aber dabei*, however. In a few cases I have – due to lack of data – had to use a later number. Such was the case for Azerbaijan (1993-number used instead), the Czech Republic (1993-number used instead) and Uzbekistan (1992-number instead). Yet as all three of these countries are situated very far from the threshold that I will propose below, the ordering should also reflect their position in 1989-1991.

With regard to the denotative side of the coin, to make the variable comparable to that used by Przeworski and Limongi (1997 : 159), it must capture the actual level of economic wealth of the average inhabitant, i.e., GDP per capita measured at 'constant U.S. dollars computed at purchasing-power parities'. But which threshold logically separates the classes, the 'haves' and the 'have-nots'? Here, I once again adhere to the analysis of Przeworski and Limongi. They (1997 : 165) conclude that '[t]he probability that a democracy will die during any particular year in a country with an income above $4,000 is practically zero'. In gist, above this threshold a democracy that has been established will not break down due to economic crisis. Thus, and in order not to be accused for tampering with the cut-off points, I will employ this threshold to separate a relatively high level of economic development from a relatively low level of economic development.

Figures for GDP per capita at constant prices at purchasing-power parities (PPP) can be found in the World Bank's *World Development Indicators 2005*. Przeworski and Limongi threshold of $4,000 is based on 1985 PPP USD. I have recalculated the figure using the World Development Indicators, which use 2000 PPP USD, and thus arrived at the number $6,236. This brings us to the following operational definition: *A country has a high level of economic development when its GDP per capita, measured at constant PPP prices, in the first available year of post-communist independence (i.e., preferably within the span of 1989-91) exceeds that indicated by Przeworski and Limongi in 'Modernization' (i.e., $6,236) as reported by the World Bank's World Development Indicators 2005*. The consequent classification is illustrated below (see the figures in appendix 2).

Figure 5: Economic development at the breakdown of communism[85]

+ Relatively high economic development	- Relatively high economic development
Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ukraine	Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

1.5 The general explanatory model

As was done in chapter 3 for the actor-centred variables, it is possible to depict the combination of the dependent variable of the political regime form and independent structural variables in a table. The following picture emerges:

Table 1: An overview of the dependent and independent variables

	Country I	Country II	Country N
Ethno-linguistic homogeneity	Absent/present	Absent/present	Absent/present
Beneficial communist legacy	Absent/present	Absent/present	Absent/present
Prospects for EU-membership	Absent/present	Absent/present	Absent/present
High economic development	Absent/present	Absent/present	Absent/present
Political regime form	Outcome	Outcome	Outcome

In table 2, I have illustrated the actual empirical outcomes on the five independent variables. Once again, plus (+) indicates the presence of the particular attribute covering the variable, minus (-) indicates its absence.

[85] The differences in GDP among my countries do not completely match those described in other accounts, e.g. Kitschelt (2003). But the data are derived from the World Bank and otherwise seems reliable.

Table 2: An overview of the scoring on the independent variables

	Ethno-linguistic homogeneity	Beneficial communist legacy	Prospects for EU-membership	High economic development
Albania	+	-	+	-
Armenia	+	-	-	-
Azerbaijan	+	-	-	-
Belarus	-	-	-	-
Bulgaria	+	-	+	+
Czech Republic	+	+	+	+
Estonia	-	+	+	+
Georgia	-	-	-	-
Hungary	+	+	+	+
Kazakhstan	-	-	-	-
Kyrgyzstan	-	-	-	-
Latvia	-	+	+	+
Lithuania	-	+	+	+
Moldova	-	-	-	-
Mongolia	+	-	-	-
Poland	+	+	+	+
Romania	+	-	+	+
Russia	-	-	-	+
Slovakia	+	+	+	+
Slovenia	+	+	+	+
Tajikistan	-	-	-	-
Turkmenistan	-	-	-	-
Ukraine	-	-	-	+
Uzbekistan	-	-	-	-

2. A structural analysis of post-communist political pathways

Mirroring the analysis of chapter 3, I will employ typological theory to analyse the political pathways of post-communism, only this time around from a structure-centred point of view.

Recall that the dependent variable was conceptualised as a trichotomy of political regime forms, a classification entailing a tripartition. Combined with the four dichotomous classifications covering the serial operations on the independent variables, the typology can be unfolded in the following manner.[86]

Figure 6: The full typology[87]

		+Ethno				-Ethno			
		+Eco		-Eco		+Eco		-Eco	
		+Leg	-Leg	+Leg	-Leg	+Leg	-Leg	+Leg	-Leg
+Dem	+EU								
	-EU								
+Hyb	+EU								
	-EU								
+Aut	+EU								
	-EU								

The complexity of this theoretical mapping of the possible types is staggering. Though the dependent and the independent variables have been conceptualised in what was perceived to be the simplest manner possible, the typology contains no less than 48 types. My aim will hence be to decrease this complexity through reduction.

I now intend to unfold the combination of dependent and independent variables at the familiar four points in time, viz., 1992, 1996, 2000 and 2004. Yet before doing so, the theoretical expectations must be clarified. The foundation of this work has already been laid in the discussion of the independent variables. Recall that the justifications for including each of the five independent variables was that when the attribute used to separate the dichotomous classes was present, the variable would theoretically make for democracy, and when it was absent, the variable would theoretically make for autocracy.

[86] As in chapter 3, the respective positioning of the independent variables in the eye of the beholder is coincidental.

[87] 'Ethno' is shorthand for the variable 'Ethno-linguistic homogeneity'. 'Leg' is shorthand for the variable 'Beneficial communist legacy'. 'EU' is shorthand for the variable 'Prospects of EU-membership after the breakdown of communism'. 'Eco' is shorthand for the variable 'High economic development at the breakdown of communism'

Other than that, my preliminary expectation is (again) that good things tend to go together and vice-versa. Needless to say, structural factors do not shape each other over night – and the bold virtuous and vicious circles actor-centred expectations do thus not have a place in this analysis. However, one would still expect for instance modernization and the communist legacy to have interacted over the past generations. In short, then – and to use the lingo of historical institutionalism – we are likely to witness a situation of 'increasing returns' here as well.

To reiterate a point made in the preceding chapter, the respective destinations of democracy and autocracy are not easily reached, and only the full presence or full absence of attributes are expected to pave the way to these termini. By implication, in the longer term I expect the cases to clump along the diagonal and in particular in the two polar types of cell 1 and 48, i.e., the types where i) democracy is combined with the presence of all attributes and ii) autocracy is combined with the absence of all attributes. I will refer to the former polar type as 'structural democracy', as it connotes a structural expectation of democracy, and the latter polar type as 'structural autocracy', as it connotes a structural expectation of democracy. The hybrid regimes should logically inhabit the intermediate types close to the diagonal as some attributes will be present (otherwise autocracy is the expected outcome) but some will also be absent (otherwise democracy is the expected outcome).

One thing needs to be added. This development is only expected to come to pass some time after upheavals of 1989-1991 as the causes are likely to kick in with a time lag. This means that the types adjacent to the polar types are even more deliberately construed as 'waiting rooms' in this analysis than was the case in the actor-centred analysis of chapter 3. How does the reality of post-communism conform to these expectations?

2.1 The full typology with empirical referents, 1992-2004

Figure 7 illustrates the full typology with empirical referents that comes into existence when combining the ordering of the post-communist countries on the attribute covering the dependent variable of political regime forms in 1992 (the short-term) with the orderings on the attributes covering the four independent variables. The numbers in each of the cells indicate how many cases fall in that particular type.

Figure 7: The full typology with empirical referents, 1992

		+Ethno				-Ethno			
		+Eco		-Eco		+Eco		-Eco	
		+Leg	-Leg	+Leg	-Leg	+Leg	-Leg	+Leg	-Leg
+Dem	+EU	4							
	-EU								
+Hyb	+EU		2		1	3			
	-EU				3		2		5
+Aut	+EU								
	-EU								3

The 23 countries in existence back then occupy eight different types. We see that the pattern is somewhat 'fuzzy', hence confirming that the structural effects carried a time lag. To be sure, the two polar types of 'structural democracy' and 'structural autocracy' house all democracies and all autocracies. In other words, no country that is not a hybrid regime falls outside these two polar types. But the lands of the hybrid regimes are much more confusing. Most noteworthy, five countries that were expected to be autocracies (as all attributes are absent) are to be found in the 'autocracy waiting room'. Secondly, the overall number of hybrid regimes is very high, mirroring the modest variation on the dependent variable in the early 1990s. Let us see what happens when we move four years down the road.

Figure 8: The full typology with empirical referents, 1996

		+Ethno				-Ethno			
		+Eco		-Eco		+Eco		-Eco	
		+Leg	-Leg	+Leg	-Leg	+Leg	-Leg	+Leg	-Leg
+Dem	+EU	4				3			
	-EU								
+Hyb	+EU	1	2		1				
	-EU				2		2		3
+Aut	+EU								
	-EU				1				5

The 24 countries now in existence (due to the velvet divorce of Czechoslovakia) inhabit ten types. Figure 8 shows that the expected dynamics have only partly come to pass by 1996 (the medium-term). First, four countries that either exhibit the presence or the absence of all attributes still belong in the realm of hybrid regimes, i.e., they belong in types that I have construed as 'waiting rooms'. This indicates that the structures have only partly come into their own. Second, three countries have in fact moved into the class of democracy in spite of the absence of ethno-linguistic homogeneity. Likewise, one country with the presence of ethno-linguistic homogeneity belongs to the class of 'autocracy'. Ethno-linguistic homogeneity simply does not seem to discriminate as expected. With this in mind, let us identify the outliers.

To diminish the complexity of the presentation, I will not include tables showing the full functional reduction this time around but merely reveal the identity of the countries behind the numbers. It turns out that Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have in fact become democracies in spite of lacking the attribute of ethno-linguistic homogeneity. Furthermore, Azerbaijan is an autocracy in spite of being ethno-linguistically homogeneous. This indicates that the variable of 'ethno-linguistic homogeneity' holds little explanatory power. What happens when we move to 2000?

Figure 9: The full typology with empirical referents, 2000

		+Ethno				-Ethno			
		+Eco		-Eco		+Eco		-Eco	
		+Leg	-Leg	+Leg	-Leg	+Leg	-Leg	+Leg	-Leg
+Dem	+EU	5	1			3			
	-EU								
+Hyb	+EU		1		1				
	-EU				2		2		2
+Aut	+EU								
	-EU				1				6

By 2000, the 24 countries once again fall into ten different types. Ethno-linguistic homogeneity still does not seem to have much explanatory value as four countries are either democracies (three) or autocracies (one) in spite of having or missing this attribute. Notice, however, that the pattern is now more in line with the theoretical expectations. Only two

countries that do not stand out on this particular attribute defy the expectation of belonging to the polar types. Furthermore, the two polar types account for no less than eleven out of 24 countries. But before we can make any conclusions about the overall picture, it is necessary to decide what to do with the ethno-linguistic variable. Let us see if it is carrying more explanatory power by 2004 (the long-term).

Figure 10: The full typology with empirical referents, 2004

		+Ethno				-Ethno			
		+Eco		-Eco		+Eco		-Eco	
		+Leg	-Leg	+Leg	-Leg	+Leg	-Leg	+Leg	-Leg
+Dem	+EU	5	1			3			
	-EU				1				
+Hyb	+EU		1		1				
	-EU				1		1		2
+Aut	+EU								
	-EU				1		1		6

On the basis of figure 10, we may now conclude that ethno-linguistic homogeneity does not carry explanatory value that merits including it. With regard to the two most important classes of regime forms – democracy and autocracy – it is simply unable to discriminate. Thus, the Baltic threesome remains democracies in spite of the absence of this attribute whereas Azerbaijan remains in the autocratic camp in spite of the presence of this attribute. To remedy this fact, I will wield Occam's Razor[88] and eliminate the variable of ethno-linguistic homogeneity (on the 'typological' justification for discarding the variable, see George and Bennett, 2005 : 30).

As a robustness-check of doing so, I have once again undertaken a statistical K-means analysis of the four independent structural variables and the dependent variable of political regime forms in 1992, 1996, 2000 and 2004 specifying a 3-cluster solution. An F-test allows us to see which variables are significant in accounting for differences between the clusters. It turns out that ethno-linguistic homogeneity is the only one that does not pass the

[88] This principle, which can be traced back to the English philosopher William of Occam, entails that one should not increase the number of entities required to explain a phenomenon beyond what is absolutely necessary.

conventional thresholds of statistical significance; in fact, it is very insignificant in accounting for the clusters over the entire period (see appendix 4). This further justifies wielding Occam's Razor.[89]

2.2 The reduced typology with empirical referents

Discarding the variable of 'ethno-linguistic homogeneity', we end up with the following property space, one made up of the dependent variable of the political regime form and the three remaining independent variables. Figures 11-14 illustrate the consequent empirical distributions in 1992, 1996, 2000 and 2004, respectively.

Figure 11: The reduced typology with empirical referent, 1992

		+Eco		-Eco	
		+Leg	-Leg	+Leg	-Leg
+Dem	+EU	4			
	-EU				
+Hyb	+EU	3	2		1
	-EU		2		8
+Aut	+EU				
	-EU				3

Figure 12: The reduced typology with empirical referent, 1996

		+Eco		-Eco	
		+Leg	-Leg	+Leg	-Leg
+Dem	+EU	7			
	-EU				
+Hyb	+EU	1	2		1
	-EU		2		5
+Aut	+EU				
	-EU				6

[89] Notice, though, that the very high levels of statistical insignificance may to some extent result from my preliminary exclusion of the ex-Yugoslav countries (with the exception of Slovenia). At least one of these – Bosnia-Herzegovina – is a very ethnically diverse country that has in fact 'underperformed' politically when bearing the other structural constraints in mind.

Figure 13: The reduced typology with empirical referent, 2000

		+Eco		-Eco	
		+Leg	-Leg	+Leg	-Leg
+Dem	+EU	8	1		
	-EU				
+Hyb	+EU		1		1
	-EU		2		4
+Aut	+EU				
	-EU				7

Figure 14: The reduced typology with empirical referent, 2004

		+Eco		-Eco	
		+Leg	-Leg	+Leg	-Leg
+Dem	+EU	8	1		
	-EU				1
+Hyb	+EU		1		1
	-EU		1		3
+Aut	+EU				
	-EU		1		7

Four things are worth noticing. First, and not too surprisingly, the complexity is less intimidating this time around. Seven types hold empirical referents in 1992 (the short-term), 1996 and 2000 (the mid-term) whereas nine such types are in existence in 2004 (the long-term). Second, the countries now cluster relatively nicely along the diagonal. Third, the two 'waiting rooms' practically empty out over the period; the number of empirical referents in these types decrease from eleven in 1992, to six in 1994, to four in 2000, and finally hit a low of three in 2004. Fourth, and in continuation of this, the respective polar types of 'structural democracy' and 'structural autocracy' house many (and ever more) countries: in 2000 and 2004 no less than 15 out of 24. Having reached this far, it once again makes sense to engage in an exercise of functional reduction to shift focus from the overall distribution to the positioning of the individual countries. Tables 3-6 illustrate the actual empirical types found in 1992, 1996, 2000 and 2004, respectively.

Table 3: The types that have empirical referents, 1992

Cases	Beneficial communist legacy	Prospects for EU-membership	High economic development	Political regime form
Czechoslovakia Hungary Poland Slovenia	+	+	+	Democracy
Estonia Latvia Lithuania	+	+	+	Hybrid
Bulgaria Romania	-	+	+	Hybrid
Albania	-	+	-	Hybrid
Russia Ukraine	-	-	+	Hybrid
Armenia Azerbaijan Belarus Georgia Kazakhstan Kyrgyzstan Moldova Mongolia	-	-	-	Hybrid
Tajikistan Turkmenistan Uzbekistan	-	-	-	Autocracy

The seven empirical types encountered in 1992 are illustrated in table 3. Taken together, the respective polar types of 'structural democracy' and 'structural autocracy' only house seven countries out of 23. Yet, the two adjacent types that are construed as 'waiting rooms' for countries moving towards the polar types, i.e., the hybrid regimes that either have all or none

of the attributes, hold no less than eleven countries. Let us move to 1996 to check what happens.

Table 4: The types that have empirical referents, 1996

Cases	Beneficial communist legacy	Prospects for EU-membership	High economic development	Political regime form
Czech Republic Estonia Hungary Latvia Lithuania Poland Slovenia	+	+	+	Democracy
Slovakia	+	+	+	Hybrid
Bulgaria Romania	-	+	+	Hybrid
Albania	-	+	-	Hybrid
Russia Ukraine	-	-	+	Hybrid
Armenia Georgia Kyrgyzstan Moldova Mongolia	-	-	-	Hybrid
Azerbaijan Belarus Kazakhstan Tajikistan Turkmenistan Uzbekistan	-	-	-	Autocracy

The picture has changed quite a lot by 1996. Seven different types are still in existence but thirteen out of 24 countries now belong within the two polar types. The adjacent types are thus left with only six countries. Also, all democracies and autocracies save one are again found within the twin types of 'structural democracy' and 'structural autocracy'. The structural logic seems to be kicking in. What happens when we move another four years ahead in time?

Table 5: The types that have empirical referents, 2000

Cases	Beneficial communist legacy	Prospects for EU-membership	High economic development	Political regime form
Czech Republic Estonia Hungary Latvia Lithuania Poland Slovakia Slovenia	+	+	+	Democracy
Romania	-	+	+	Democracy
Bulgaria	-	+	+	Hybrid
Albania	-	+	-	Hybrid
Russia Ukraine	-	-	+	Hybrid
Armenia Georgia Moldova Mongolia	-	-	-	Hybrid
Azerbaijan Belarus Kazakhstan Kyrgyzstan	-	-	-	Autocracy

Tajikistan Turkmenistan Uzbekistan				

By 2000, eight and seven countries, respectively, belong to the two polar types, and only Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Mongolia swim against the current by belonging within the adjacent types. Also, Romania indicates that at least one other pathway to democracy than that of type 1 is in existence.

Table 6: The types that have empirical referents, 2004

Cases	Beneficial communist legacy	Prospects for EU-membership	High economic development	Political regime form
Czech Republic Estonia Hungary Latvia Lithuania Poland Slovakia Slovenia	+	+	+	Democracy
Bulgaria	-	+	+	Democracy
Mongolia	-	-	-	Democracy
Romania	-	+	+	Hybrid
Albania	-	+	-	Hybrid
Ukraine	-	-	+	Hybrid
Armenia Georgia Moldova	-	-	-	Hybrid
Russia	-	-	+	Autocracy
Azerbaijan Belarus	-	-	-	Autocracy

Kazakhstan Kyrgyzstan Tajikistan Turkmenistan Uzbekistan				

Finally, the distribution in 2004 is a bit more surprising. The two polar types still house fifteen out of 24 countries but the complexity has increased with nine different types now being in existence. Also, Bulgaria on the on hand and Russia on the other hand indicate that it is possible to reach the destinations of democracy and autocracy, respectively, without having a clean sheet (i.e., either a full presence or a full absence) on the structural attributes. Finally, Mongolia constitutes a different kind of exception as it has in fact become a democracy in spite of lacking all three attributes; it has thus, and very thoroughly, been able to break the structural logic.

3. Conclusions

The structural analysis gives rise to some quite stark conclusions. It turns out that the independent variables have more or less sealed the longer-term fates of the post-communist countries on the dependent variable of this study: the political regime forms. As expected, the structural logic is not so salient in the early 1990s. Here, a very large number of countries that were expected to be democracies (as all attributes are present) or autocracies (as all attributes are absent) were in fact hybrid regimes. But the structural constraints seemingly kicked in over the decade.

To connect this to the ordering on the compound of attributes, the countries have very much come to cluster within the two polar types of 'structural democracy' and 'structural autocracy', respectively. The pattern is somewhat more confusing with regard to the third class, hybrid regime, but – being intermediate political phenomena – this was only to be expected. Also, since the mid-1990s only a few hybrid regimes exhibit a clean sheet, i.e., all attributes are either present or absent, on the independent variables. Such outliers, countries that should in fact belong within the two polar types, more or less die out during the 1990s. Or, to phrase it differently, they do in fact move into the two polar types.

The described dynamics become particularly clear when eliminating the independent variable of 'ethno-linguistic homogeneity', which holds little explanatory value. Discarding this attribute, the compound, or property space, consists of 24 possible types. After engaging

in an exercise of complete functional reduction, i.e., after deleting all null cells, seven to nine types are left standing in 1992, 1996, 2000 and 2004, the four years analysed above.

That may seem a lot considering that the sample consists of only 24 countries. As already touched upon, however, the countries that are not hybrid regimes very much clump within the two types of 'structural democracy' and 'structural autocracy'. In 1992, seven out of seven non-hybrid regimes were found within these two polar types. In 1996, the equivalent numbers were thirteen out of thirteen, in 2000, fifteen out of sixteen, and in 2004, fifteen out of eighteen. In other words, during these four years, only four observations were able to break the structural expectation with regard to the classes of democracy and autocracy; and only one (Mongolia in 2004) did so by lacking more than one attribute. Furthermore, the majority of the countries that were expected to inhabit the two polar types, but falls short only on the dependent variable of the political regime form, do in fact move into these types over the period in question. Thus, Estonia, Latvia and Slovakia all become democracies whereas Kyrgyzstan, having lingered quite some years within the hybrid regime class, move into the autocratic equivalent. Since the mid-1990s, only Georgia, Armenia and Moldova defy the structural logic by remaining hybrid regimes in spite of their structural attributes.

Let us try to scrutinize the relative importance of the independent variables. In the long-term, three pathways to democracy exist, two of which seem to be relatively viable. The most important is, of course, that of polar type 1, housing the eight countries that gained EU-membership in 2004. However, Bulgaria and Romania testify to the existence of a pathway that does not include the presence of a 'benign communist legacy'. Finally, Mongolia is a complete outlier, having none of the expected attributes of democracy. Concerning autocracy, the picture is much simpler. All autocracies have – in the long term – traversed one and only pathway, viz., that of polar type 24.

Where does all this leave us? When piecing the typological property space together, we achieve some very strong ammunition against a long-term actor-perspective. Clustering within the two polar types of 'structural democracy' and 'structural autocracy', the countries in which the attributes were all either present or absent conformed to the expectations 2004 – with the sole exceptions of Armenia, Georgia and Moldova. Likewise, the countries that had some but not all attributes went into the class of hybrid regime. In gist, the scope for action may not have been very large after all. This indicates that the structural perspective is unavoidable for those interested in the general political tripartition of the post-communist setting. In the subsequent chapter, I will try elaborate this by relating the actor-based independent variables to the structural independent variables.

Appendix 1. Ethno-linguistic homogeneity

The data covering the attribute of 'Ethno-linguistic homogeneity' are derived from the CIFP 'Ethnic Diversity Score'. The Ethnic Diversity Score is calculated on the basis of Shih's D1 index of ethnic diversity. This measure is based on the number of ethnic groups in a country weighted by the fraction of the population each group represents. A primary strength of Shih's measure is that both the number and the sizes of ethnic groups jointly determine the degree of ethnic diversity. The Ethnic Diversity Score is on a nine-point scale: 1 is 'low diversity', and 9 is 'high diversity.' Recall the operational definition: *A post-communist country is ethno-linguistically homogenous if it obtains a score of 4 or lower as reported by the CIFP's 'Ethnic Diversity Score'.*

Table A: The scores and ordering on 'Ethno-linguistic homogeneity'

Country	Ethnic diversity score	'Ethno-linguistic homogeneity'
Albania	2	+
Armenia	3	+
Azerbaijan	3	+
Belarus	5	-
Bulgaria	4	+
Czech Republic	4	+
Estonia	6	-
Georgia	6	-
Hungary	4	+
Kazakhstan	7	-
Kyrgyz Republic	7	-
Latvia	7	-
Lithuania	5	-
Moldova	6	-
Mongolia	3	+
Poland	2	+
Romania	4	+
Russian Federation	5	-
Slovak Republic	4	+
Slovenia	4	+

Tajikistan	6	-
Turkmenistan	5	-
Ukraine	5	-
Uzbekistan	5	-

Appendix 2. Beneficial communist legacy

The data covering the attribute of 'Beneficial communist legacy' is derived from Herbert Kitschelt's paper 'Accounting for Outcomes of Post-Communist Regime Change: Causal Depth or Shallowness in Rival Explanations?'. Kitschelt does not include Mongolia. It is, however, not difficult to classify this country. Hitherto known as the 16th Soviet republic (cf. Becker, 1992 and Ginsburg, 1995), Mongolia shows kinship with what Kitschelt terms the colonial periphery (score = 0). Its *de jure* sovereignty means that it may be reasonable to grant it the status of patrimonial communism (score = 1) but this does not alter the fact that the landlocked republic cannot obtain either the status of national-accommodative (score = 2) or bureaucratic-authoritarian (score = 3); and hence cannot cross the threshold to a beneficial communist legacy. Recall the operational definition: A *post-communist country has a beneficial communist legacy if it achieves a score of 2 or 3 as reported by Herbert Kitschelt in 'Accounting for Outcomes of Post-Communist Regime Change'*.

Table B: The scores and ordering on 'Beneficial communist legacy'

Country	Kitschelt score	'Beneficial communist legacy'
Albania	1	-
Armenia	0	-
Azerbaijan	0	-
Belarus	1	-
Bulgaria	1	-
Czech Republic	3	+
Estonia	2	+
Georgia	1	-
Hungary	2	+
Kazakhstan	0	-
Kyrgyz Republic	0	-
Latvia	2	+
Lithuania	2	+
Moldova	0	-
Mongolia	[0-1]	-
Poland	2	+

Romania	1	-
Russian Federation	1	-
Slovak Republic	2	+
Slovenia	2	+
Tajikistan	0	-
Turkmenistan	0	-
Ukraine	1	-
Uzbekistan	0	-

Appendix 3. Economic development at the breakdown of communism

The data on 'High economic development' is derived from the World Bank's *World Development Indicators 2005*. Recall the operational definition: *A country has a high level of economic development when its GDP per capita, measured at constant PPP prices, in the first available year of post-communist independence (i.e., preferably within the span of 1989-91) exceeds that indicated by Przeworski and Limongi in 'Modernization' (i.e., $6,236) as reported by the World Bank's World Development Indicators 2005*.

In Przeworski and Limongi's article, the relevant number is $4,000. This was on the basis of 1985 PPP USD. I have recalculated the number using the *World Development Indicators's* measure of 2000 PPP USD, and thus arrived at the number $6,236. Where the *World Development Indicators 2005* did not hold data for the years 1989-1991, the first available year was employed. Such was the case for Azerbaijan (1993-number used instead), the Czech Republic (1993-number used instead) and Uzbekistan (1992-number instead).

Table C: The scores and ordering on 'Economic development at the breakdown of communism'

Country	GDP per capita, constant PPP prices, in 1989-1991	'Relatively high economic development'
Albania	3517.96	-
Armenia	3341.27	-
Azerbaijan	2617.05	-
Belarus	5324.39	-
Bulgaria	7442.67	+
Czech Republic	11644.56	+
Estonia	10092.29	+
Georgia	5899.95	-
Hungary	11585.31	+
Kazakhstan	5715.51	-
Kyrgyz Republic	2355.43	-
Latvia	9901.86	+
Lithuania	11407.59	+
Moldova	3753.81	-
Mongolia	2699.39	-

Poland	7396.02	+
Romania	6581.44	+
Russian Federation	10645.86	+
Slovak Republic	11447.27	+
Slovenia	12733.12	+
Tajikistan	2389.82	-
Turkmenistan	5809.35	-
Ukraine	9215.61	+
Uzbekistan	1554.44	-

Appendix 4. K-means cluster analysis

F-test statistics for the K-means cluster analysis (3-cluster solution specified). See Chapter 5, appendix 3 for the technical description of the procedure.

Table D: ANOVA (1992)

	Cluster		Error		F	Sig.
	Mean Square	df	Mean Square	df		
BenCom	6,175	2	,330	20	18,691	,000
EthnoLin	,783	2	2,365	20	,331	,722
EU	,781	2	,204	20	3,822	,039
SocioEco	132705844,076	2	857374,571	20	154,782	,000
FH1992	6,382	2	1,467	20	4,350	,027

Table E: ANOVA (1996)

	Cluster		Error		F	Sig.
	Mean Square	df	Mean Square	df		
BenCom	6,689	2	,315	21	21,217	,000
EthnoLin	,570	2	2,295	21	,249	,782
EU	,907	2	,197	21	4,594	,022
SocioEco	143467314,038	2	829073,371	21	173,045	,000
FH1996	15,004	2	2,325	21	6,453	,007

Table F: ANOVA (2000)

	Cluster		Error		F	Sig.
	Mean Square	df	Mean Square	df		
BenCom	6,689	2	,315	21	21,217	,000
EthnoLin	,570	2	2,295	21	,249	,782
EU	,907	2	,197	21	4,594	,022
SocioEco	143467314,038	2	829073,371	21	173,045	,000
FH2000	14,737	2	2,699	21	5,460	,012

Table G: ANOVA (2004)

	Cluster		Error		F	Sig.
	Mean Square	df	Mean Square	df		
BenCom	6,689	2	,315	21	21,217	,000
EthnoLin	,570	2	2,295	21	,249	,782
EU	,907	2	,197	21	4,594	,022
SocioEco	14346731 4,038	2	829073,371	21	173,045	,000
FH2004	15,344	2	3,402	21	4,511	,023

Chapter 5. Contrasting structures, actors – and diffusion[90]

The two preceding analyses of post-communist political pathways had one thing in common: they both exposed some striking empirical regularities. Not only was it possible to draw a very coherent picture of the causal pathways, it was possible to do so from both from an actor-centred and a structural point of view. In a nutshell, the most salient feature of post-communism seems to be the combination of intra-subregional similarities and inter-subregional differences incarnated by the respective polar types of chapters 3 and 4. The question therefore becomes this: How do the actor-centred and structural variables, as 'wholes', relate to each other? Differently said, Which, if any, is more important causally?

1. Piecing the general picture together

To relate the actor-centred variables to their structural counterparts, it makes sense to transform each of the two clusters of variables into one dimension – to treat them as 'packages' as I will call it in this chapter (i.e., as 'wholes' or composite indices to use the technical term). As already noted, the focal point here is the striking regularities discovered in the preceding chapters. To capture these regularities, I construe each of the clusters of variables as *one* dimension on which we may either encounter the presence of all attributes, the presence of some but not all attributes or the presence of no attributes. This is equal to saying that we may either encounter the absence of no attributes, the absence of some but not all attributes or the absence of all attributes. Theoretically, a 'full presence' connotes that the country in question is expected to be a democracy, a 'mixed sheet' that it is expected to be a hybrid regime, and a 'full absence' that it is expected to be an autocracy.[91]

The matching operational definitions can be stated as follows:

1) A post-communist country *has a 'full presence' of attributes with regard to the actor-based and the structure-based package, respectively, if all attributes are present as reported in the analysis of chapter 3 and chapter 4, respectively*.
2) A post-communist country *has a 'mixed sheet' of attributes with regard to the actor-based and the structure-based package, respectively, if some but not all attributes are*

[90] For a shorter version of chapter 5, see Møller (2007e).
[91] Note that this is merely a restatement of the theoretical expectations of chapter 3 and 4.

present (or absent) as reported in the analysis of chapter 3 and chapter 4, respectively.

3) A post-communist country *has a 'full absence' of attributes with regard to the actor-based and the structure-based package, respectively, if all attributes are absent as reported in the analysis of chapter 3 and chapter 4, respectively*.

The consequent empirical orderings are illustrated in table 1 (see appendix 1 for the full picture of the orderings on the independent variables and on the consequent 'packages').

Table 1: An overview of the status on the actor-based and the structural 'package'

Countries	Status on actor-based package	Status on structure-based package
Czech Republic	Presence	Presence
Estonia	Presence	Presence
Hungary	Presence	Presence
Latvia	Presence	Presence
Lithuania	Presence	Presence
Poland	Presence	Presence
Slovakia	Presence	Presence
Slovenia	Presence	Presence
Moldova	Presence	Absence
Albania	Mixed	Mixed
Bulgaria	Mixed	Mixed
Romania	Mixed	Mixed
Russia	Mixed	Mixed
Armenia	Mixed	Absence
Georgia	Mixed	Absence
Kyrgyzstan	Mixed	Absence
Mongolia	Mixed	Absence
Ukraine	Absence	Mixed
Azerbaijan	Absence	Absence
Belarus	Absence	Absence
Kazakhstan	Absence	Absence

Tajikistan	Absence	Absence
Turkmenistan	Absence	Absence
Uzbekistan	Absence	Absence

If we combine these two classifications – thus creating an ordering on a compound of attributes – a typology comes into existence. This typology exhausts the possible logical combinations of statuses on the two dimensions. In figure 1, the typology is illustrated with empirical referents.

Figure 1: A typology of the possible combinations on the actor-centred package and the structure-based package

		Actor-based package		
		Full presence	Mixed	Full absence
Structure-based package	Full presence	8		
	Mixed		4	1
	Full absence	1	4	6

One thing is immediately clear. The respective orderings on the two dimensions correlate strongly.[92] No less than fourteen out of 24 countries are found within the two polar types. An additional four falls into the mixed/mixed type, i.e., only six out of 24 countries do not clump along the diagonal of the typology. Notice, furthermore, that five of these six countries fall into types adjacent to polar type 9. In other words, only one country falls into the theoretically illogical types that combine a full presence on one package with a full absence on the other package.

Let me demonstrate the strength of the relationship with a little detour. In an interesting article on 'Left Libertarian Parties' from 1988, Herbert Kitschelt calculates a "coefficient of

[92] If we interpret the three values as an ordinal-scale of 1 ('full presence'), 2 ('mixed sheet') and 3 ('full absence'), then the statistical correlation between the two packages – which is significant at the .000-level – finds expression in a Gamma of around 0.882 .

reproducibility" (CR), which in the context of two dichotomised variables calculates the percentage of cases that are correctly classified according to the theory tested. The measure is very simple. Kitschelt divide the number of cases that do not belong in the expected types with the full number of cases (N of mistakes / N of cases) and then deduct this proportion from 1. In the present case, the result is a CR = 0.75 – a very high coefficient considering that this edifice taps into no less than five different variables melted into two trichotomous classifications. Let us use a full functional reduction to identify the countries.

Table 2: The types that have empirical referents

Countries	Status on actor-based package	Status on structure-based package
Czech Republic Estonia Hungary Latvia Lithuania Poland Slovakia Slovenia	Presence	Presence
Moldova	Presence	Absence
Albania Bulgaria Romania Russia	Mixed	Mixed
Armenia Georgia Kyrgyzstan Mongolia	Mixed	Absence
Ukraine	Absence	Mixed
Azerbaijan Belarus Kazakhstan Tajikistan	Absence	Absence

Turkmenistan Uzbekistan		

We recognize the by now familiar, nay, expected pattern. Polar type 1 houses the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, i.e., the new EU member states. Conversely, polar type 9 houses Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, i.e., the Central Asian countries and their Azerbaijani and Belarusian soul mates. The country that turns out to behave erratic is Moldova – a country that has a full absence on the actor-centred package and a full absence on the structural equivalent. It is thus not so surprising that the small landlocked republic has remained a hybrid regime ever since 1992.[93]

Recall the theoretical expectations connected to the operationalised variables: that all good things go together and vice-versa. This is not least the case when analysing the interplay between structural and actor-choices. Reflecting on the multicollinearity among explanatory factors of post-communist political and economic developments, Gregorz Ekiert (2003 : 116) has phrased it succinctly:

> 'Thus, most of the attempts to determine a limited set of specific causes and to establish simple linear relationships to outcomes are likely to be questionable. The metaphor of vicious and virtuous circles captures much better the relationship among these factors. They interact together in a complex fashion, producing the "increasing returns" that characterize path-dependent development'.

Bearing this in mind, polar type 1 can be construed as 'democracy guaranteed' whereas polar type 9 can be construed as 'autocracy guaranteed'. The rest of figure 1's types predict, theoretically at least, the presence of hybrid regimes. But these predictions are much weaker than those connected with the polar types as the virtuous and vicious circles imply 'overdetermination' at the extremes but more randomness in the intermediate area. Let us add the dependent variable to the picture, and thus also reintroduce the dimension of time, to check whether the empirical reality conforms to these expectations, cross-spatially as well as cross-synchronically. This time around, I will go straight to a full functional reduction. As in

[93] But – anticipating the conclusion of this chapter – it is still surprising that the orderings on the two attributes are so very much out of sync in the case of Moldova.

chapter 3, I am unable to include 1992 because of priority; table 3 thus shows the empirical distribution in 1996.

Table 3: The types that have empirical referents, 1996

Countries	Status on actor-based package	Status on structure-based package	Political regime form 1996
Czech Republic Estonia Hungary Latvia Lithuania Poland Slovenia	Presence	Presence	Democracy
Slovakia	Presence	Presence	Hybrid
Moldova	Presence	Absence	Hybrid
Albania Bulgaria Romania Russia	Mixed	Mixed	Hybrid
Armenia Georgia Kyrgyzstan Mongolia	Mixed	Absence	Hybrid
Ukraine	Absence	Mixed	Hybrid
Azerbaijan Belarus Kazakhstan Tajikistan Turkmenistan Uzbekistan	Absence	Absence	Autocracy

In 1996, the post-communist tripartition has already come into existence. As a consequence, the theoretical expectations connected to the polar types of figure 1 are very close to being

fulfilled. Only one out of the eight countries that were found in the polar type of 'democracy guaranteed' is still a hybrid regime, i.e., does not belong within the new polar type 1. Likewise, all six countries situated within the polar type of 'autocracy guaranteed' are actually autocracies in 1996. The remaining ten countries are all hybrid regimes – just as expected. How is the situation in 2000?

Table 4: The types that have empirical referents, 2000

Countries	Status on actor-based package	Status on structure-based package	Political regime form 2000
Czech Republic Estonia Hungary Latvia Lithuania Poland Slovakia Slovenia	Presence	Presence	Democracy
Romania	Mixed	Mixed	Democracy
Moldova	Presence	Absence	Hybrid
Albania Bulgaria Russia	Mixed	Mixed	Hybrid
Armenia Georgia Mongolia	Mixed	Absence	Hybrid
Ukraine	Absence	Mixed	Hybrid
Kyrgyzstan	Mixed	Absence	Autocracy
Azerbaijan Belarus Kazakhstan Tajikistan Turkmenistan Uzbekistan	Absence	Absence	Autocracy

By 2000, all of the eight countries that were situated within the polar type of 'democracy guaranteed' in figure 1 have become democracies. Likewise, all of the six countries that were situated within the opposite polar type of 'autocracy guaranteed' in figure 1 are (still) autocracies. However, two countries not situated within these two polar types defy the expectation of having hybrid regimes, to wit Romania (democracy) and Kyrgyzstan (autocracy). Differently said, in 2000 only two out of the 24 observations are not classified correctly on the dependent variable (given the theoretical expectations). Let us, finally, finish the excursion by moving to 2004.

Table 5: The types that have empirical referents, 2004

Countries	Status on actor-based package	Status on structure-based package	Political regime form 2004
Czech Republic Estonia Hungary Latvia Lithuania Poland Slovakia Slovenia	Presence	Presence	Democracy
Bulgaria	Mixed	Mixed	Democracy
Mongolia	Mixed	Absence	Democracy
Moldova	Presence	Absence	Hybrid
Albania Romania	Mixed	Mixed	Hybrid
Armenia Georgia	Mixed	Absence	Hybrid
Ukraine	Absence	Mixed	Hybrid
Russia	Mixed	Mixed	Autocracy
Kyrgyzstan	Mixed	Absence	Autocracy
Azerbaijan Belarus	Absence	Absence	Autocracy

Kazakhstan Tajikistan Turkmenistan Uzbekistan			

By 2004, the theoretical expectations are, again, completely fulfilled with regard to both the polar type 'democracy guaranteed' and its opposite number 'autocracy guaranteed'. Thus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia have all reached the promised land of democracy. Likewise, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan have all become autocracies. However, with regard to the remaining types of figure 1, the expectations are now more violated than what was the case in both 1996 and 2000. Bulgaria and Mongolia have become democracies in spite of lacking attributes on both the actor-centred package and the structural. Likewise, Russia has become an autocracy from a similar point of departure and Kyrgyzstan has become an autocracy in spite of having a mixed sheet on the actor-centred package. In plain English, four out of 24 observations now defy the expectations.

How about the hybrid regimes in the period in question? Recall once more the logic of a classification: that classes are separated by differences in kind (is the attribute present?) whereas the differences within a class are measured in degree (to what extent is the attribute present?).[94] Reaching back to the original trichotomy of political regime forms, we can elucidate the differences in the degree of *hybrid regime-ness* by scrutinizing the Freedom House scores for the empirical referents in this class. Two things are noteworthy. First, throughout the period in question, 1996-2004, the countries that that have relatively many attributes present and the countries that have relatively many attributes absent were situated at reverse ends of the continuum covered by the class of hybrid regime.

Bulgaria and Romania – which had many although not all attributes present – were very close to the threshold of democracy throughout their career as hybrid regimes. On the contrary, countries with few attributes present such as Kyrgyzstan, Armenia, and Georgia were close to the threshold of autocracy in most of the period. Some countries – notable Russia (with relatively many attributes present) and Mongolia (with relatively few attributes present) behaved more erratic, especially diachronically. Still, in general the countries also

[94] As Sartori (1970 : 1044) pertinently reminds us '[…] it is only within the same class that we are entitled – and indeed required – to ask which object has more or less of an attribute or property'.

mirror the classificatory logic when we shift focus from differences in kind to differences of degree – albeit the pattern is less clear-cut than when analysing differences (in kind) across the classes on the dependent variable.

How sure can we be of the general results of the typological analysis? To check this, I have repeated the analysis of this chapter using, first, an open-ended hierarchical cluster analysis and, second, a K-means analysis specifying a 3-cluster solution. The objective of the analysis is to scrutinize whether the typological findings are confirmed. It is, so to speak, a test for robustness. And it turns out that the results are indeed robust. To elaborate, the cluster analyses confirm the existence of what I have termed the post-communist tripartition. Once again, three separate clusters are identified. At one extreme, we have the Central- and Eastern European democracies; at the other, the Central Asian autocracies and their Belarussian and Azerbaijani brethren; and in-between, the intermediate regions. This is illustrated in appendix 3.

The stability of the tripartition confirms the merits of employing a typological mapping. As I stated with the assistance of Giovanni Sartori in chapter 3, a classificatory schema requires a certain amount of stability on behalf of the empirical referents. To quote yet again: 'The very act of assigning something to a type imposes upon it a definiteness, a fixity, a form. Therefore, with respect to a state of flux, classes and types can be more deceptive than informative' (1976 : 255-256). If it were not for the longevity and boundedness of the tripartition[95] – characteristics that also extend to the explanans – continuous measures would arguably have a competitive edge. The lack of cross-temporal variation after the mid-1990s should thus be seen as an advantage, considering the chosen approach. Moving to the higher ground, it is more interesting to identify the clear differences in kind within the post-communist setting than the differences in degree for one very simple reason: that this macro-region is indeed characterised by systematic, not random diversity.[96]

[95] Notice, however, that Sartori (1976) works within the confines of systems theory. Hence, the required permanence also reflects '[…] the contention that classifications are not merely mapping devices but also seize, when felicitous, systemic properties' (p. 148). My agenda is more humble in this respect – but the need for form rather than formlessness still applies.

[96] A further argument favouring the typological schemas is that any encompassing explanatory framework combining 'deep' and 'proximate' explanations – i.e., one that seeks to elucidate a cross-temporal causal chain – is more preoccupied with general than with particular differences in the explanandum. This is what Kitschelt (1999 : 24) points out when making the following assertion: 'If the object of explanation is *classes of events or*

2. Contrasting the packages

The preceding analysis demonstrated that the clear majority of the post-communist countries move in sync on the actor-centred and the structural dimension, the respective packages that is. Both packages accurately predict the status on the dependent variable for most of the countries, most of the time. Also, the mutual correspondence is striking. Thus, the simultaneous full presence on both packages is a sufficient condition for democracy in both 2000 and 2004 whereas the simultaneous full absence on both packages is a sufficient condition for autocracy in 1996, 2000 and 2004. Only two other empirical pathways lead to democracy, namely the mixed/mixed combination of Romania and Bulgaria and the idiosyncratic pathway of Mongolia,[97] which includes a full absence on the structural package.

So, does this mean that it makes little sense to contrast the causal leverage of the two alternative approaches? At first glance, one may feel inclined to answer this question in the affirmative. On the basis of the empirical analysis, it is of course possible to argue that the actor-centred approaches have the upper hand when it comes to explaining democracy whereas the structural approach has the upper hand when it comes to explaining autocracy. Thus, Mongolia has become a democracy with a full absence on the structural package. With regard to the actor-centred equivalent, it at least has a mixed sheet, i.e., this approach is relatively better equipped when it comes to accounting for the surprising Mongolian performance. Contrariwise, Kyrgyzstan has become an autocracy in spite of a mixed sheet on the actor-centred package. With regard to the structural package, on the other hand, it has the expected full absence.

But these are, obviously, minor details. Over time, both packages generally do the job, in particular with regard to democracies and autocracies, respectively. That is not the end of the discussion, however. As already mentioned, causality is a concept that implies at least four requirements. First, a theoretical link between cause and effect; second, a corresponding

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persistent arrangements in polities, however, it is more likely that structural constraints, mediated by causal mechanisms that involve intentional human action, account for the outcomes'.

[97] As should be clear by not, Mongolia constitutes the outlier par excellence considering the general typological findings. In the process of writing this dissertation, I did carry out a qualitative case-study of the Mongolian aberration. However, it simply turned out that I was unable to expound the surprising democratic merits of the case. And that conclusion did not seem interesting enough to justify including a 20 page case-study. What Mongolia shows, then, is that some of the variation on the dependent variable is simply unaccounted for by the present analysis. I will briefly reflect on this in the Conclusions.

empirical link; third, that the cause antedates the effect; fourth, that other factors are controlled for. Both the structural and the actor-centred variables more or less fulfil each of these criteria (as causes). Recall that the respective variables were i) selected with reference to their theoretical relationship with the dependent variable of the political regime form, ii) turned out to stand in the expected empirical relationship to the three possible outcomes on this variable, iii) were measured at a point in time more or less predating the measurement on the dependent variable, and iv) co-varied with the outcome even when the other package was included.

But notice that much the same can be said about the relationship between the structural variables (as causes) and their actor-centred equivalents (as effects). The structural attributes all predate the actor-centred. The character of the prior regime form, the prospects of EU-membership and the level of modernization were all measured at a point in time prior to the point at which the displacement of communists in the first election and the constitutional engineering were measured. More to the point, the structural attributes were meant to capture phenomena that can be traced almost centuries back in time whereas the actor-centred attributes were meant to capture novel choices. This is important because temporal concerns often override correlations when seeking to establish spuriousness. Quoting Gerring (2001 : 142. See also 126),

> 'The further away we can get from the outcome in question, the better (ceteris paribus) our explanation will be. This explains some of the excitement when social scientists find 'structural' variables that seem to effect public policy or political behavior. It is not that they offer fuller (deeper) explanations; indeed, the correlations between X and Y are likely to be much weaker than with cultural or leadership theories. It is not that they are more relevant; indeed, they are less relevant for most policy purposes, since they are least amenable to manipulation (usually). And it is not that they offer more accurate explanations; as we move away from the outcome of interests to causes that have greater priority, our explanation is likely to become more difficult to prove. Thus, priority often imposes costs on other criterial dimensions'.

Also, the two packages stand in a very systematic empirical relationship, as demonstrated by the analysis of this chapter. Most stunningly, a full presence of attributes on the structural package fully predicts a full presence of attributes on the actor-centred package (or vice-versa). The relationship is less strong with regard to a mixed sheet and a full absence, yet

only six out of 24 countries do not show complete correspondence – and five out of this six-pack fall into types adjacent to those capturing a full correspondence. Can we, finally, establish a theoretical link between the two packages? Clearly we cannot establish a causal chain leading from the choices of the actors to the structural attributes because of their respective position on the dimension of time. In plain English, we humans cannot alter the circumstances of the past. But how about a causal chain leading from the structural attributes to the choices of the actors? I will argue that it is very much possible to make the case for such a chain.

Recall that the actor-centred variables such as initial elections and constitutional choice to a large degree capture various aspects of 'open politics' and societal mobilization. It is only to be expected that the structural point of departure should impact on this. If a modernized society with a partial liberal inheritance and links to Western Europe is in existence – as was the case in Central and Eastern Europe after the breakdown of communism – then competitive politics, including the formation of viable oppositional parties, is very much to be expected. If, on the other hand, no liberal inheritance, no significant modernization and a virtual isolation from the Western world is a fact of life – as was the case in Central Asia and, albeit to a lesser extent, the Caucasian countries – then competitive politics, including the formation of viable oppositional parties, is not to be expected.[98]

In a nutshell, the actors do not act in a vacuum, and the structural package is likely to significantly shape their room for action. As Kitschelt and Malesky (2000 : 16) have phrased it, the actor-centred variables may be '[…] endogenous to the political power configuration at the point of communist collapse, but reflecting a variety of deeper layers of political-economic power structures'.[99] Differently said, even though the causal chain may very well work through the actor-centred variables, they will be spurious as 'root causes' or ulterior independent variables. This is what Herbert Kitschelt points to when he terms the 'proximate' (i.e., actor-centred or institutional) explanations 'shallow' in contrast to the

[98] This point can be underpinned by a reference to cleavage theory. As Seymor Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan once so lucidly described, the structural properties of a given society may create social cleavages that i) become politicised via actors such as parties and ii) freeze. See Bartolini and Mair (1990) for a thorough elucidation of this claim.

[99] See also Kopstein and Reilly's (2000 : 4) observation that '[t]he problem with this [institutional] literature is that, on the whole, it does not include within its theoretical ambit an explanation for why some countries could choose the right policies and institutions and why others could not. As useful as it is, therefore, it calls out for a deeper causal analysis'.

'deeper' structural explanations. To quote him (2003 : 64), a relationship as the one found in the preceding analysis '[…] may reveal interaction effects between deeper causes ('structural conditions') affecting shallower causes ('triggers')' .

In an insightful methodological critique of actor-centred explanations in general and Transitology in particular, Michael Coppedge (1999 : 474-475) has phrased it in a way that is worth quoting at length:

> 'The insistence on bridging levels of analysis is not mere methodological prudery. Empirical questions of great theoretical, even paradigmatic, import, such as whether individuals affect democratization, depend on it. Rational choice theory assumes that they do; Linz and Stepan and O'Donnell, Schmitter and Whitehead asserted they do. Yet, despite all the eloquent theorizing that led to 'tentative conclusions about uncertain transitions', all the cases covered by *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule* underwent successful transitions that have lasted remarkably long. There are many possible explanations for this genuinely surprising outcome but one that is plausible enough to require disconfirmation is the idea that these transitions were driven by structural conditions. Even if it is true that elites and groups had choices and made consequential decisions at key moments, their goals, perceptions, and choices may have been decisively shaped by the context in which they were acting. If so, they may have had a lot of proximate influence but very little independent influence after controlling for context'.

Notice how the empirical conclusion of the preceding analysis confirms neither of the two temporal versions of the 'structural' arguments presented in the Introduction. First, it disconfirms the first argument, which holds that the actors are most important during the transitions but that the structures then kick in. The typological analyses demonstrated that neither the actor-centred nor the structural explanations were adequate in the short run – only over time. Second, while the conclusions do confirms one of the points of the second argument, viz., that the actor-choices mirrored the structural constraints from day 1, it does not support the notion that the institutional choices has achieved a life of their own in the longer run – with Mongolia as a possible exception.

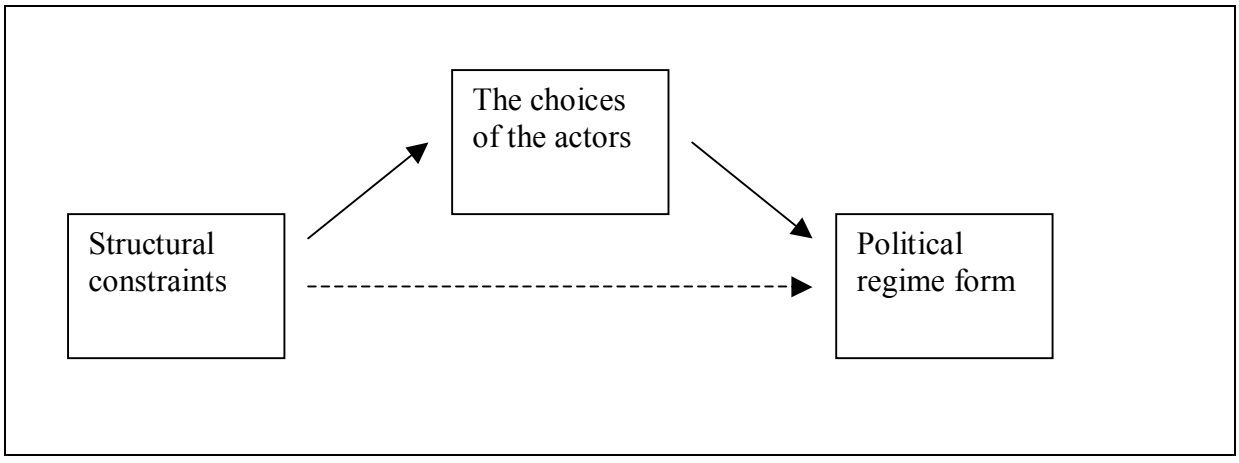
In sum, then, the present claim holds that the structural point of departure impacts upon the very choices of the actors and that these two dynamics then, taken together, shape the political pathways. We should not get carried away by the merits of this explanatory edifice,

however. As Kitschelt has – correctly – pointed out, the actor-centred choices may be completely spurious. To quote:

> 'Either the deeper causes x "work through" the shallower cause y to bring about the final outcome z ($x \rightarrow y \rightarrow z$); or the cause x bring about both what appears as the shallower cause y as well as the outcome z ($x \rightarrow y$; $x \rightarrow z$). Because of collinearity, we cannot statistically distinguish between these alternatives' (2003 : 75).

This objection goes for my analysis, too. The ultimate test requires actual process-tracing of the post-communist cases (cf. George and Bennett, 2005) – but that exercise lies beyond the scope of this dissertation. Notice, however, that the convincing theoretical links between the identified actor-centred attributes and the outcome on the dependent variable indicates that the causal chain does indeed pass through these choices. Also, the ability to construct theoretical links between the structural constraints and the actor-choices further underpin the notion of one, coherent chain. In figure 2, I have illustrated this by letting the full-drawn arrows pass through 'the choices of actors' whereas the hypothetically possible causal link leading from the 'structural constraints' and directly to the 'political regime form' is represented by a dotted arrow.

Figure 2: The general causal chain emerging from the typological analyses



Notice also how this theoretical edifice, when including 'the choices of the actors' as the intervening link, ties the structural attributes to the political outcome via the choices of the actors. Differently said, the explanation of post-communist democratisation (and 'autocratisation') arrived at does more than demonstrate correlations; it elucidates the causal

chain[100] as well. Notice finally that this explanation can account for the most salient aspect of the variation on the dependent variable of the political regime form, to wit the systematic combination of intra-subregional similarities and inter-subregional differences. To reiterate a by now somewhat tedious observation, the notion of voluntaristic action (i.e., the very premise of the actor-centred approaches) does not fit well with the fact that the eight Central and Eastern European countries have travelled the same path, that the same can pretty much be said about the five Central Asian countries, and that the paths of the countries situated between these two extremes, albeit to a lesser extent, also show mutual kinship.[101] The structural approach, on the other hand, elucidates this pattern quite nicely because each region would logically have a relatively equal structural point of departure.

I will come back to the structural logic of the tripartition. One other possibility exists, however, and we need to discuss this as well. Maybe it is neither the independent choices of the actors nor the structure-contingent choices of the actors that explain the described pattern on the dependent variable? Maybe it is regional effects as such? To elaborate, maybe the choices of the actors have been subregionally interdependent not due to the structural point of departure but due to diffusion? This is the issue to which we now turn.

3. Enter diffusion

The question that I am posing is once again this: Why is it that the independent actor-centred and structural variables correlate so very systematically with the dependent variable of political regime forms, and with each other as well for that matter? The structural point of departure provides once possible answer. But let us try to further scrutinize the question by revisiting one particular actor-centred variable, viz., 'constitutional engineering'. I have chosen this one rather than the 'political competition'-variable because the former had a competitive edge as explanatory factor *vis-à-vis* the latter, cf. chapter 3. What I will do in the

[100] As Kitschelt (1999 : 13) has pointed out – and I agree with him – '[w]hat social science should explore are *chains of causation*, organized around variables at different levels of causal depth'.

[101] This conclusion both echoes and substantiates (by scrutinizing a larger setting) that of Kitschelt, Mansfeldova, Markowski and Toka (1999 : 394) on the so-called 'Tabula Rasa' approach to post-communism. To quote: 'The tabula rasa view may permit the random variation of democratic experiences across the entire cohort of post-communist countries, but not the presence of systematically diverging patterns of democratic competition, as we have observed them in our four East Central European countries and, if we are correct, as they are likely to exist in many of the other post-communist polities as well'.

subsequent sections is to build an – as strong as possible – case for diffusion before using the preceding typological analyses to criticise the logic of regional effects.

3.1 M. Steven Fish on the unmixed blessing of stronger legislatures in the post-communist world[102]

Recall that M. Steven Fish (2006) has, together with a colleague, created a Parliamentary Power Index, according to which a country receives a relatively high score if relatively much constitutional power is vested in the parliament and a relatively low score if the opposite is the case. Fish's ulterior expectation is that parliamentarism will favour democracy. In the article 'Stronger Legislatures, Stronger Democracies' , he tests this claim in the context of 25 post-communist countries. The expectations are very much confirmed by the data. The statistical correlation between the Parliamentary Power Index (measured in the early 1990s) and the average Freedom House ratings in 2003-2005 (a proxy of democracy) finds expression in a Pearson's R of no less than -.92; the independent variable thus accounts for an astonishing 85 per cent of the variation on the dependent.

Furthermore, Fish quickly checks if the general relationship is spurious. Perhaps, he speculates, the Parliamentary Power Index reflects the democratic achievements at the time of the inauguration of the respective constitutions, 'the constitutional moment'? (2006 : 9). The answer turns out not to be in the affirmative. Or, better, 'the constitutional moment'-explanation only accounts for a very modest part of the variation. This leaves Fish (2006 : 11) free to conclude that

> '[…] the power of legislatures, as established in constitutions adopted between the late 1980s and mid-1990s, predicts political openness in the mid-2000s more accurately than political openness at the time of the adoption of constitutions predict the power of legislatures'.

3.2 Spuriousness and regional effects

It is laudable that Fish checks for spuriousness.[103] Yet one, very noteworthy speculation does not enter into his account: that regional effects may be relevant. This is somewhat surprising.

[102] This sections draws on Møller (2007b).

[103] Fish acknowledges that spuriousness could stem from other sources than initial open (or closed) politics. He also checks for structural variables such as economic development. Fish (2006 : 12) thus points out that, '[w]hat

The fact of the matter is that the values on both his independent and his dependent variable are very systematically dispersed across the space of the former communist world. A few illustrations should suffice to make this point. In figure 3 and figure 4 below, I have turned Fish's indexes covering the independent variable and the dependent variable[104] into two classifications each yielding three respective classes.

Notice that the classification on both the dependent and the independent variables differs from those I crafted in chapter 2 and 3. The reason is two-fold. First, I am merely performing the present exercise to illustrate some shortcomings in Fish's analysis. Second, and related to this, I use new thresholds to avoid producing a critique which is biased by my previous conceptualisation. On the dependent variable of the political regime form, I have relied on the Freedom House's tripartition between 'free', 'partly free' and 'not free' states for the year of 2004. On the independent variable, matters are somewhat more complicated. In the article, Fish indicates that a score below 0.5 is a sufficient condition for remaining authoritarian. Hence, I have employed this threshold to capture the seemingly pernicious class of 'presidential systems'. To delimit its opposite number – i.e., 'parliamentary systems' – I have chosen the threshold of 0.65 simply to get some kind of a trichotomy. Everything in-between falls into the class 'hybrid systems' (see appendix 2 for the numbers).

Figure 3 and 4 demonstrate that the intra-subregional similarities (within subregional clusters) and differences (between subregional clusters) on both the independent and the dependent variable are strikingly clear-cut. In Central and Eastern Europe, we encounter all 'free' countries and all parliamentary systems save Mongolia. In Caucasus and Central Asia, we encounter all 'not free' countries and all presidential systems save Belarus and Russia. And in-between, we find most of the intermediary cases, i.e., the 'partly free' countries and hybrid constitutional systems.

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is more, the effect of the PPI score on change in FH scores holds up well in statistical analyses that control for other variables that might affect democratization, such as economic development'. In other words, he considers whether the institutional choices are endogenous to prior structural constraints – and rejects this potential objection. I should add that he does not test for the character of the prior regime form or the prospect of EU-membership, however. This is probably why he is able to reject the structural corrective *tout court*.

[104] Note that the dependent variable is only measured in 2004 here whereas Fish employs the average of the period 2003-2005.

Figure 3: The geographical distribution of post-communist constitutional systems

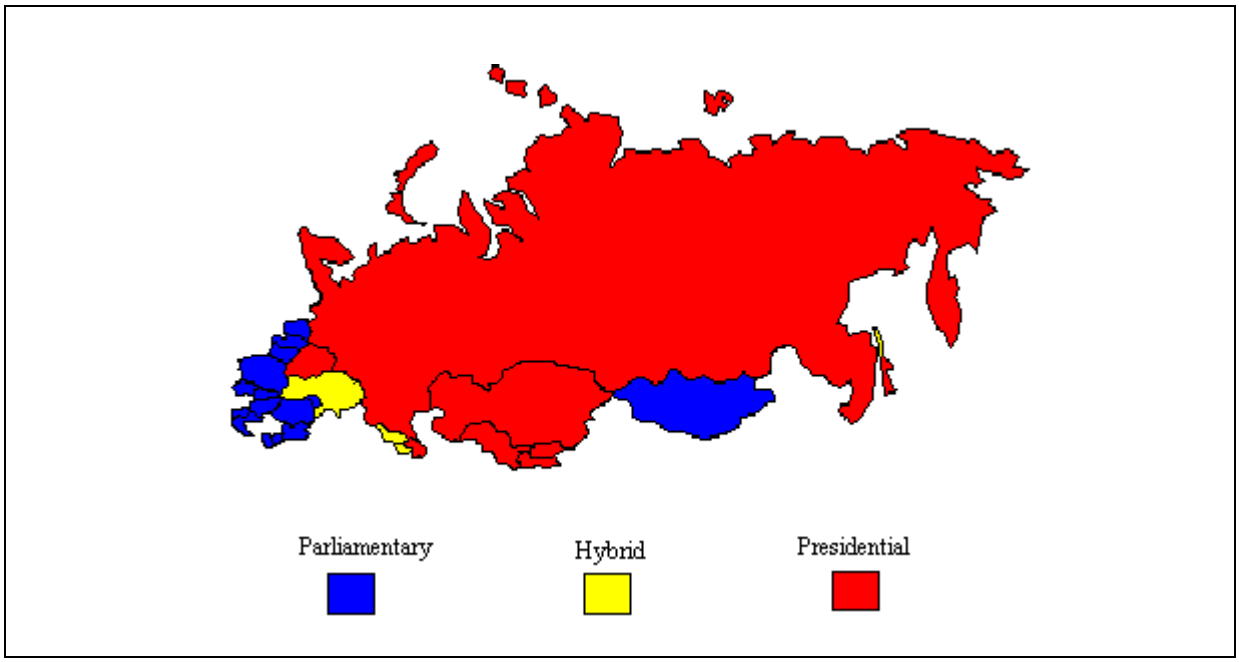
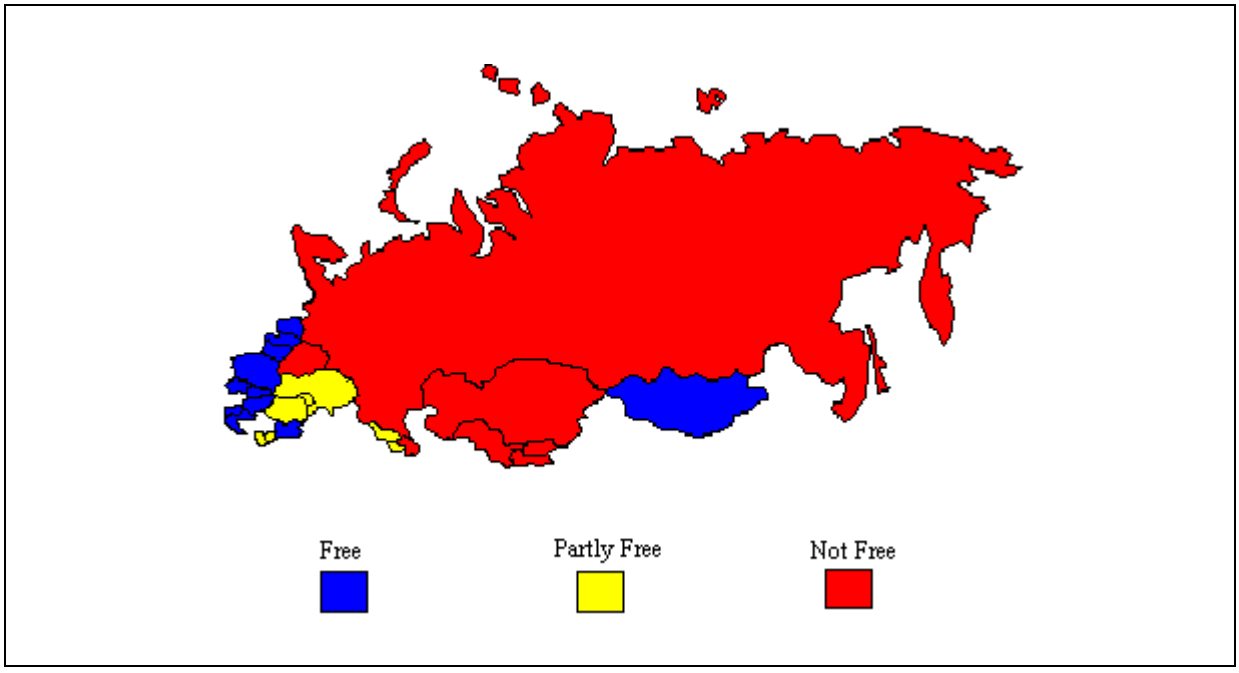


Figure 4: The geographical distribution of post-communist political regimes, 2004



In a nutshell, out of no less than 25 countries only Mongolia and – to a lesser extent – Belarus and Russia are genuinely able to break the subregional logic. Differently said, we find the very same pattern as that revealed by the preceding typological analyses. This is interesting. When we meet geographically differences such as these, then the explanation is may simply be geographical. And this leads us to the doorstep of regional effects.

3.3 Diffusion under post-communism

According to Fish, the post-communist countries have chosen constitutional systems in a more or less voluntaristic way – and the institutional constraints have then kicked in over the latest decade. But why is it, one cannot help wonder, that Mongolia was the only country outside of Central and Eastern Europe that opted for parliamentarism after the breakdown of communism? And, conversely, why is it that no country in Central and Eastern Europe opted for presidentialism pure and simple?

Regional effects such as diffusion present a possible answer to this riddle. Let me try to underpin this assertion with two qualitative examples from the post-communist setting. In the early 1990s, Vladimir Meciar was the pre-eminent political actor in the newly-born republic of Slovakia. Backed by the strongest and most well-organized political force in the country, Meciar had emerged from the 'velvet divorce' of 1992 as a peerless power-claimant. Most scholars and commentators have, ever since, keenly emphasized Meciar's semi-autocratic instincts and desire for centralized power. With good reasons, too. Whereas other Visegrad-countries such as the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland quickly went into the class of democracy as operationalised in this dissertation, Slovakia lingered as a hybrid regime for years and years. This is why Slovakia has been a partial outlier throughout the empirical analyses of chapters 2 to 4. Equally interesting, scholars have emphasized that Meciar was, ultimately, responsible for crafting the new constitutional framework. As Karen Henderson (2002 : 55) notes,

> 'Slovakia's constitution was controversial from its inception. It was largely the product of only one part of the political spectrum – the supporters of the second Meciar government elected in June 1992 […] The constitution was passed in haste, and never legitimated by a popular referendum […]'.

With this in mind, it seems somewhat paradoxical that Slovakia ended up with a parliamentary system and, by extension, with a very weak presidency. Why did Meciar not simply gather the (constitutional) reins of power as president? Why did he opt for the parliamentary complexity that led to his first stay on the oppositional benches shortly after the inauguration of the new constitution? One possible answer is of course that Meciar and his supporters perceived the parliamentary battleground as one in which he would triumph – which, to a large extent, he did, at least during the 1990s. But it seems equally plausible that regional effects sealed his hands. Notice how all Central and Eastern European countries,

according to Fish's index, chose a parliamentary form of government after the breakdown of communism. With a strong presidency, Slovakia would have constituted a very evident exception. I do not mean to say that the choice of a strong presidency was impossible. But the path leading to it was strewn with obstacles for the simple reason that Slovakia was situated in the heart of Europe.

This situation was strikingly different at the other extreme of the post-communist setting: Central Asia. This brings me to my second example – Kyrgyzstan. In the early 1990s, this small Central Asian republic was hailed as an 'island of democracy' (Anderson, 1999) in an otherwise autocratic sea. Its president, Askar Akayev, in particular, was perceived as a genuine democrat through and through. Relatively untainted by communism, he was, or so it seemed, both willing and able to fight off the autocratic fashions of his neighbourhood. In 1992, Kyrgyzstan had an average Freedom House score of 3.0, and as late as 1999, the country was still a hybrid regime according to my definition and operationalisation. This was why the small country constituted a 'regional' exception in at least some of the analyses of chapters 2 to 4. In the 2000s, however, it turned out that the optimism that surrounded Akayev was misplaced. As expected from a structural point of departure, Kyrgyzstan – still ruled by Akayev – became an autocracy. But notice one more thing. Even in the heyday of the optimism, the early 1990s that is, Kyrgyzstan opted for a presidency no less centralised than that of Tajikistan (and very close to those of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan with regard to centralisation) according to Fish's index. If Akayev was in fact a convinced democrat back then – and he may very well have been just that – then on this point he did not break the subregional logic either.

All that I have said here can, at a more general level, be reduced to a statement about diffusion. Very crudely put, maybe the political elites of Kazakhstan opted for a strong president (and hence a weak parliament) in January 1993 because the political elites in neighbouring Uzbekistan had done so the month before? And maybe the political elites of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan simply followed suit when they chose their constitutional arrangement within the subsequent twelve months? Likewise, maybe the political elites in Lithuania opted for a strong parliament (and hence a weak president) in October 1992 because their Estonian counterparts had just done so in June the same year? And so on and so

forth with Central Europe; South-eastern Europe; Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus; and the Caucasian countries.[105] In gist, maybe we have a situation of spatial autocorrelation?

This is an intriguing notion. Once put in place, constitutional systems become (more or less) lasting constraints on actions. In the language of 'new institutionalism', the arrangements 'freeze', they become institutions and they then shape the arena in which the actors operate. But if the initial constitutional choice is merely the result of diffusion, then it is this factor – and not the institutional choice per se – that accounts for the variation on the dependent variable of the political regime form. Also, regional effects mean that the assumption of causal homogeneity, which the use of regressions requires, is violated. If diffusion is important within subregional clusters, then we have a situation of causal heterogeneity, i.e., the status on the independent variable will have different consequences with respect to the dependent variable depending on the locality. Only within (sub-)regions do we, in such case, have the needed causal homogeneity (cf. Mainwaring and Perez-Linan, 2005).

And that is not all. Quoting John Gerring (2001 : 179):

> 'Moving to the social science ground: suppose, in our study of government growth, that certain countries were influenced *by each other* (rather than deciding taxing and spending issues independently of one another). This could occur through the influence of an international agency like the World Bank, the IMF, or the EU, or through a simple process of diffusion. What, one might inquire, is the logic of counting each as a separate case? Indeed, N is equal to precisely 1 if country policies are entirely the product of diffusion. Of course diffusion, and the criterion of independence more generally, is usually a matter of degrees. (*All* cross-national studies suffer from some violation of the independence criterion).'

To relate this assertion to the setting under investigation, if we take the diffusion-argument to the extreme, we do not even have a medium-sized population of post-communist cases – just *one* case of post-communist diffusion. More realistically, given the regional dividing lines

[105] The causal mechanisms underlying the regional effects normally pointed to under the headline of 'diffusion' are, first, dissemination of norms and ideas and, second, the stance of international actors such as the EU. See Mainwaring and Perez-Linan (2005).

identified by the typological analyses, we may have only three cases, to wit the three identified subregional clusters.

Interestingly, the diffusion argument is very seldom voiced in the institutionalist literature; and it is practically never tested.[106] In Timothy Frye's (1997) earlier mentioned attempt to account for the rise of 'presidential systems' in the post-communist setting, a large number of competing 'economic', 'political' and 'societal' approaches are discussed. But Frye does not even mention diffusion in his overview of theories of constitutional choice. This is all the more strange as the diffusion-argument seems plausible enough to require disconfirmation, at least with regard to the constitutional explanation of democracy in the post-communist setting. How else can we, in the absence of antecedent structural factors, explain that Fish's constitutional variable – and Frye's for that matter – varies so very systematically from a geographical point of view? As a proximate cause, the constitutional variable definitely holds its own. But the puzzle here is why the members of each geographical cluster should move in a uniform direction at the outset of the period. And here diffusion may indeed have been the ulterior cause. Either way, the proponents of the 'proximate' explanations need to refute this objection.

3.4 The logical problem

So do I, if I wish to confirm the explanatory value of the structural approach in explaining political regime forms in the post-communist setting. If diffusion holds the key to the empirical regularities then this equals saying that the structural regularities do not hold the key.[107] Let me, then, try to argue against diffusion as the 'root cause'. As I have just demonstrated, much can be said to support the relevance regional effects. Still, I resist buying the argument sketched above with regard to the post-communist setting. This has to do with a quite salient logical problem. The empirical analyses of this dissertation have, to reiterate a pivotal point, clearly demonstrated that a combination of intra-subregional similarities and inter-subregional differences exists within the post-communist setting – and that this combination exists with regard to both the orderings on the independent variables and that on their dependent counterpart. This is exactly why regional diffusion offers a tempting explanation.

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[106] Whereas it is sometimes raised and tested in structural analyses. See, e.g., Doorenspleet (2001).

[107] Of course, a more realistic statement would be that the structural factors held part of the key and diffusion held another part.

But recall, first, that regional effects create causal heterogeneity. To elaborate, a given causal mechanism will hold in some (sub-)regions but not in others. This does, however, not seem to have been the case in the post-communist setting. For the prime findings of the analyses have been the striking (but theoretically expected) regularities *across* the entire realm, not only *within* subregional clusters. As such, the analyses support the presence of causal homogeneity, not causal heterogeneity.[108] Second, recall the point about the dimension of time that I made when contrasting the structural and actor-centred approaches in the first part of this chapter. This argument – in a nutshell that the structural attributes predate the actor-centred attributes – apply equally well to the diffusion-variable. Any potential post-communist diffusion comes on top of the structural point of departure, so to say. Therefore, it seems likely that diffusion, if relevant, only worked as yet another link in the causal chain through which the structural similarities and differences kicked in throughout the 1990s. In short, diffusion may simply mirror (and reinforce) the fact that neighbouring countries share many structural factors.

As a final note, let me try to elaborate this point by revisiting a particular, important contribution on diffusion in the context of post-communism. I am referring to Jeffrey S. Kopstein and David A. Reilly's influential article on 'Geographic Diffusion and the Transformation of the Postcommunist World' from 2000. Kopstein and Reilly's analysis is worth a visit because it is, on the one hand, very incisive, yet, on the other hand, still does not pay heed to the structural counter-argument described above. In the article, Kopstein and Reilly demonstrate that geographical locations hold up very well in a statistical analysis of post-communist political[109] diversity which pits this factor against Fish 'initial election'-variable and Kitschelt's 'bureaucratic rectitude-variable'. The latter is (one property of) the variable I have used to cover the attribute of the 'prior regime form' but Kopstein and Reilly use the present level of corruption as a proxy for it rather than Kitshelt's own, historically based, ordering.

Departing from this somewhat trivial exercise, they attempt to unfold the logic of diffusion. Building on the existing sociological literature, diffusion is construed as having two dimensions: stock and flow. To quote, '[i]n a diffusion model the stock of a country can

[108] This is also (partly) Kopstein and Reilly's (2000 : 36) conclusion. I write 'partly' because though their general assertion is that '[…] there is strong spatial dependence across the full set of states' they also emphasise that their statistical analyses '[…] indicate statistical significance for states within each of these subregions'.

[109] Kopstein and Reilly (2000) also analyse economic diversity through the same lens but this does not interest me here.

be represented by its external environment, whereas flows represent the movement of information and resources between countries' (2000 : 13.). Moving to a lower level of generality, the two attributes are conceptualised and measured as follows:

- Stock: 'For the purpose of this study we posit a given country's spatial stock to be who its neighbors are. This is best indicated by the Polity IV democracy scores and the Economic Reform scores of the countries geographically contiguous with it' (2000 : 13).
- Flow: 'Our measure of openness is a composite score based on indicators that are conceptually linked to the exchange of ideas and associated in prior research studies to processes of diffusion. The set of six indicators gathered from the World Development Indicators, 1998, includes the number of televisions per thousand households; newspaper circulation per thousand people; outgoing international telecommunications, measured in minutes per subscriber; international inbound tourists; total foreign direct investment as a percentage of GDP; and international trade (sum of exports and imports) as a share of GDP, using purchasing power parity conversion factors' (2000 : 14-15).

Notice that these definitions and, particularly, these operationalisations to a very large extent overlap with conventional structural factors. First, keeping in mind that the post-communist countries most often share the structural properties of their immediate neighbours, stock can be said to measure the political attributes of countries that virtually mirror the country in question structurally. Second, and even more problematic, with the possible exception of 'international inbound tourists', flows basically measure the level of modernization of the country in question (for this criticism, see also Kitschelt, 2003). All this goes to show that it is empirically very hard to disentangle diffusion from structural factors. In this connection, note also that diffusion must logically start somewhere. If we accept that the presidential model was disseminated throughout Central Asia – and the parliamentary model through Central and Eastern Europe – then this only begs the following question: What determined the earliest choice of model within these particular settings? And this once more leads us back to the structural constraints.[110]

[110] I am indebted to Svend-Erik Skaaning for this argument.

To reiterate, then, diffusion is best viewed as, first, a mechanism through which the structures affect the actor-choices and, second and less interestingly for our purposes, as a process that makes the structures conform to the general makeup of their particular subregion over time – but not as an independent variable of post-communist diversity. The second argument merely equals saying that the structural constraints have themselves been created by actor-choices and diffusion at some ulterior point. That fact is an obvious one as the social world of man is, by definition, a constructed one. However, such antecedent creation is situated so far back in time that it is not relevant for the present analysis. In short, then, I feel confident enough to disregard diffusion as an independent variable in its own right – at least in the present case.

4. Conclusions

In this chapter, I have contrasted the actor-centred and the structural approaches to post-communist political change. The point of departure for this exercise is clear: both approaches do the job, at least in the longer run, when it comes to accounting for the striking empirical regularities on the dependent variable. It cannot come as a surprise, then, that the orderings on each of these two packages – i.e., the respective clusters of independent variables construed one-dimensionally – also co-vary systematically (not to say overwhelmingly). The notion of a virtuous and vicious circle, respectively, thus captures the entire triangle of actor-centred and structural causes and their political effects. Gazing upon the two regional extremes, everything seems to have favoured the eight Central and Eastern European countries whereas virtually nothing seems to have favoured their five Central Asian counterparts; and in-between we find most of the remaining countries. The post-communist tripartition is, it seems, created by both the choices of the actors and the structural constraints.

This is, however, where the dimension of time enters the picture. The structural attributes all predate their actor-centred equivalents. This may seem a simple point but it is also an important one. For it is possible to link the two packages theoretically. To elaborate, one can argue, as I have in fact argued, that the structural point of departure is likely to have shaped the arena within which the actors mobilized politically and made their choices concerning the constitutional framework in the early 1990s. Such an argument can be understood as an attempt to lay bare the causal chain through which the structures shaped the political regime form. It should be borne in mind that structures do not create democracies or autocracies –

actors do.[111] But it is possible to establish a link between structures and actors. Differently said, the actor-centred attributes are too close to the attributes on the dependent variable to form genuinely independent variables (see also Kitschelt, 2003). They are better construed as the structurally-induced causal mechanisms (on causal mechanisms, see appendix 4) which brought about the outcomes on the dependent variable.

Very much the same can be said with respect to a third causal alternative: diffusion. The systematic combination of intra-subregional similarities and inter-subregional differences makes the notion of regional effects a tempting one. But within the post-communist setting, the diffusion of the 1990s seems to have mirrored the systematic structural similarities between neighbouring countries. Furthermore, theoretically it is only possible to connect the impact of diffusion to the choices of the actors, not to the structural attributes. The reason is once again a very simple one: the structural set-up predates the diffusion of post-communism. As such, diffusion, too, is best construed as a causal mechanism through which the structural logic comes to the fore. This is, then, the conclusion of the empirical analyses: that the structural attributes seem to have sealed the fate of most post-communist countries most of the time. I have, thus, basically argued in favour of a 'legacies'-approach to post-communism. In the final chapter of this dissertation, I will attempt to travel further down this road. But before doing so, one exercise is pertinent: to descend the ladder of abstraction and focus on shorter-term oscillations within the class of hybrid regimes. This is the purpose of the subsequent chapter.

[111] To quote Huntington (1991 : 107): 'General factors create conditions favorable to democratization. They do not make democratization necessary, and they are at one remove from the factors immediately responsible for democratization. A democratic regime is installed not by trends but by people. Democracies are created not by causes but by causers'.

Appendix 1. An overview of the status on the actor-based and the structural 'package', respectively

A. The status on each of the independent actor-centred variables and the consequent status on the actor-centred package. Recall that a 'full presence' connotes the presence of all attributes, a 'mixed sheet' the presence (or absence) of some but not all attributes and a 'full absence' the absence of all attributes.

Table A: An overview of the scoring on the independent actor-centred variables

Cases	Displacement	Strong legislature	Composite status
Albania	-	+	Mixed
Armenia	+	-	Mixed
Azerbaijan	-	-	Absence
Belarus	-	-	Absence
Bulgaria	-	+	Mixed
Czech Republic	+	+	Presence
Estonia	+	+	Presence
Georgia	+	-	Mixed
Hungary	+	+	Presence
Kazakhstan	-	-	Absence
Kyrgyzstan	+	-	Mixed
Latvia	+	+	Presence
Lithuania	+	+	Presence
Moldova	+	+	Presence
Mongolia	-	+	Mixed
Poland	+	+	Presence
Romania	-	+	Mixed
Russia	+	-	Mixed
Slovakia	+	+	Presence
Slovenia	+	+	Presence
Tajikistan	-	-	Absence
Turkmenistan	-	-	Absence
Ukraine	-	-	Absence

Uzbekistan	-	-	Absence

B. The status on each of the independent structural variables and the consequent status on the actor-centred package. Recall that a 'full presence' connotes the presence of all attributes, a 'mixed sheet' the presence (or absence) of some but not all attributes and a 'full absence' the absence of all attributes

Table B: An overview of the scoring on the independent structural variables

	Beneficial communist legacy	Prospects for EU-membership	High economic development	Composite status
Albania	-	+	-	Mixed
Armenia	-	-	-	Absence
Azerbaijan	-	-	-	Absence
Belarus	-	-	-	Absence
Bulgaria	-	+	+	Mixed
Czech Republic	+	+	+	Presence
Estonia	+	+	+	Presence
Georgia	-	-	-	Absence
Hungary	+	+	+	Presence
Kazakhstan	-	-	-	Absence
Kyrgyzstan	-	-	-	Absence
Latvia	+	+	+	Presence
Lithuania	+	+	+	Presence
Moldova	-	-	-	Absence
Mongolia	-	-	-	Absence
Poland	+	+	+	Presence
Romania	-	+	+	Mixed
Russia	-	-	+	Mixed
Slovakia	+	+	+	Presence
Slovenia	+	+	+	Presence
Tajikistan	-	-	-	Absence
Turkmenistan	-	-	-	Absence

Ukraine	-	-	+	Mixed
Uzbekistan	-	-	-	Absence

Appendix 2. The Parliamentary Powers Index and the Freedom House Score 2003

Table C: The Parliamentary Powers Index and the Freedom House Score 2003

Country	Parliamentary Powers Index	Freedom House Score 2003
Albania	.75 (PAR)	3.0 (PF)
Armenia	.53 (HYB)	4.0 (PF)
Azerbaijan	.44 (PRE)	5.5 (NF)
Belarus	.28 (PRE)	6.0 (NF)
Bulgaria	.78 (PAR)	1.5 (F)
Croatia	.72 (PAR)	2.0 (F)
Czech Republic	.78 (PAR)	1.5 (F)
Estonia	.75 (PAR)	1.5 (F)
Georgia	.59 (HYB)	4.0 (PF)
Hungary	.69 (PAR)	1.5 (F)
Kazakhstan	.31 (PRE)	5.5 (NF)
Kyrgyzstan	.41 (PRE)	5.5 (NF)
Latvia	.84 (PAR)	1.5 (F)
Lithuania	.72 (PAR)	1.5 (F)
Macedonia	.78 (PAR)	3.0 (PF)
Moldova	.72 (PAR)	3.5 (PF)
Mongolia	.81 (PAR)	2.0 (F)
Poland	.66 (PAR)	1.5 (F)
Romania	.72 (PAR)	2.0 (F)
Russia	.44 (PRE)	5.0 (PF)
Slovakia	.72 (PAR)	1.5 (F)
Slovenia	.78 (PAR)	1.0 (F)
Tajikistan	.41 (PRE)	5.5 (NF)
Ukraine	.50 (HYB)	4.0 (PF)
Uzbekistan	.28 (PRE)	6.5 (NF)

Appendix 3. Two statistical cluster analyses

In the two cluster analyses below, I have repeated the typological analysis of this chapter. The variables employed are thus i) the actor-centred package, ii) the structural package, and iii) the Freedom House ratings for the respective years of 1996, 2000 and 2004.

A. The hierarchical cluster analysis

In the hierarchical cluster analysis, z-scores for all variables subject to cluster analysis are computed in order to standardise the data. Next, a distance measure – the squared Euclidean distance – is used as measure for similarity. Based on the resulting distance matrix, the units of observations are then combined (fused) into clusters in an iterative process until all cases have been assigned to a particular cluster. The logic of fusion is determined by a clustering algorithm (in this case, the Ward method which determines cluster membership on the basis of the total sum of squared deviations from the mean of a cluster). The final results are then depicted in dendrograms covering the years 1996, 2000 and 2004, respectively, on the dependent variable on the political regime form. The dendrograms are to space-consuming to be illustrated here but their results are unequivocal. They all lend support to the notion that separate (geographical) clusters exist, to wit i) Central and Eastern European democracies, ii) Post-Soviet and Balkan hybrid regimes, iii) Post-Soviet autocracies.

B. K-means analysis

The open-ended information from the hierarchical cluster analysis provides a suitable point of departure for running a K-means analysis specifying a 3-cluster solution. The three quick cluster tables illustrate the cluster centres by variables for the final cluster solution. Differently said, we get the characteristics of the three clusters on each of the variables. The F-test statistics indicated by asterisks tells us which variables are significant (below .001) in accounting for differences between the clusters. Notice, however, that the F tests are best suited for descriptive purposes because the clusters have been chosen to maximize the differences among cases in different clusters. The observed significance levels are not corrected for this and thus cannot be interpreted as tests of the hypothesis that the cluster means are equal.

Table D: Final Cluster Centres 1996

	Cluster		
	1	2	3
ActCen*	1,00	2,00	3,00
StrucCen*	1,00	2,50	3,00
FH1996*	1,75	3,45	6,25

1: Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia

2: Albania, Armenia, Bulgaria, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Mongolia, Romania, Russia, Ukraine

3: Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

Table E: Final Cluster Centres 2000

	Cluster		
	1	2	3
ActCen*	2,00	1,20	2,86
StrucCen*	2,57	1,20	3,00
FH2000*	3,86	1,65	6,00

1: Albania, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Mongolia, Russia, Ukraine

2: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia

3: Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan

Table F: Final Cluster Centres 2004

	Cluster		
	1	2	3
ActCen*	1,11	2,00	2,75
StrucCen*	1,11	2,57	2,88
FH2004*	1,22	3,21	5,94

1: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia

2: Albania, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Mongolia, Romania, Ukraine

3: Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

The statistical analyses thus confirm the results of the typological analyses, i.e., the results pass a test of robustness. Notice also how Kyrgyzstan moves between the clusters between 1996 and 2000 whereas Russia moves between the clusters between 2000 and 2004 – thereby mirroring the movement in the typological analysis.

Appendix 4. The notion of causal mechanisms

Invoking David Collier, Charles Ragin (2000 : 28) remarks that '[v]ariable-oriented researchers regularly cite unobserved case-level mechanisms to explain the cross-case patterns they document. If these mechanisms cannot be confirmed at the case level, then the variable-oriented conclusions are suspect […]'.[112] Needless to say, this point is as valid for the typological analyses carried out in the preceding chapters as for any statistical exercise. No less ardent adherents of the typological approach than George and Bennett (2005 : 239) make this very clear:

> 'Even if it exhibits a perfect correlation among a set of factors, a typology alone cannot separate causal from spurious factors, or possible from unlikely or impossible combinations of variables. However, the finding of a typological regularity can spur the search for underlying theoretical explanations or typological theories, which can then be tested through within-case analysis'.

Causal mechanisms, then, constitute the 'missing link' between independent and dependent variables, the glue that ties them together at a lower level of abstraction than that at which the variables are themselves operationalised, thus accounting for any covariation.[113] Let us make the explanation a trifle more systematic. Quoting George and Bennett (2005 : 141),

> '[…] causal mechanisms provide more detailed and in a sense more fundamental explanations than general laws do. The difference between a law and a mechanism is that between a static correlation ('if X, then Y') and a 'process' ('X leads to Y through steps A, B, C')'.

In other words, causal mechanisms are not identified by comparing independent observations across time or space (i.e., across units). Rather, they are identified by revisiting the process that leads to a certain outcome, in turn checking whether it mirrors the theoretical

[112] See also Mahoney's (2004 : 89) assertion that '[a]lthough statistical researchers do have sophisticated tools for analysing intervening variables, many scholars believe that uncovering causal mechanisms is inherently a theoretical practice that requires qualitative data evaluation rather than statistical reasoning […]'.

[113] As George and Bennett (2005 : 141) explain '[…] this commitment in principle to consistency between a theory and what is known at the lowest observable level of space and time does *not* rule out positing and testing theories on the macrolevel'.

expectations. I do not have the scope or the resources to do so in the present dissertation. When I refer to causal mechanisms, I simply state them in theoretical form, rather than letting them reflect empirical findings of within-case analysis.

Part III: Elaborating and Re-testing the Findings

Chapter 6. Colour 'Revolutions': Whence? Wherefore? Whither?

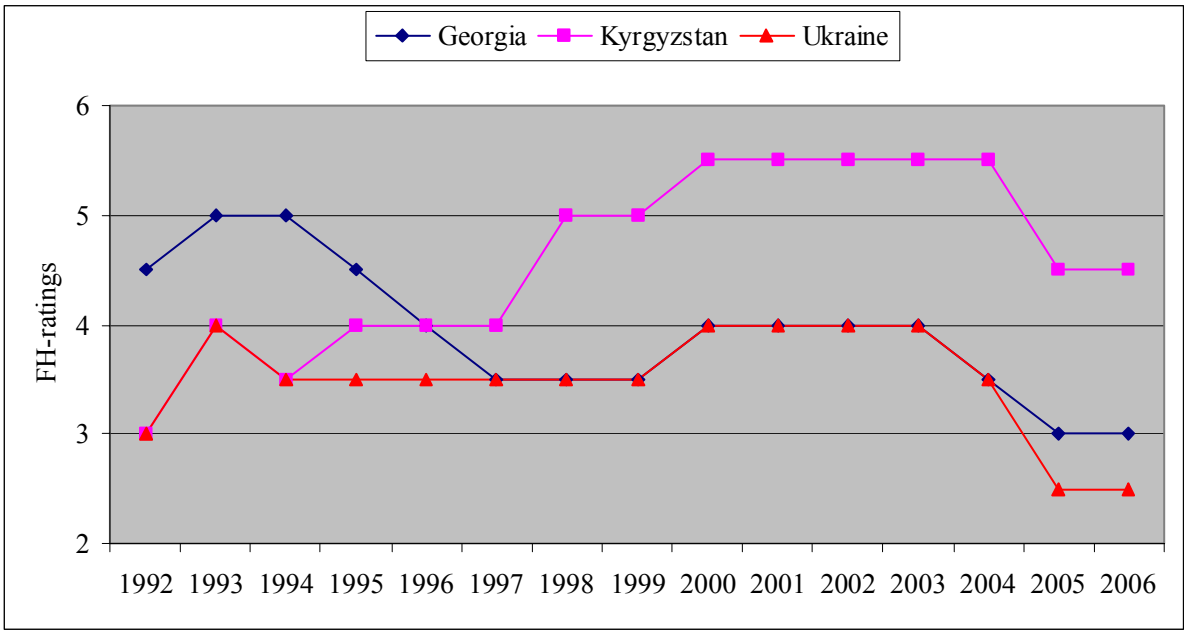
1. Something's stirring in the post-Soviet setting

The typological analyses of the preceding three chapters left off in 2004. By then, one country had begun to disturb the geographical tripartition of the 2000s.[114] I am here referring to Russia, which in the said year, for the first time since the breakdown of communism, crossed the threshold to the class of autocracy. But that is not all. Beginning in 2003, a process of political change that pointed in the very opposite direction of the Russian one began to affect the setting.

Following the at least partly forged parliamentary elections in November that year, the so-called 'Rose Revolution' swept through Georgia culminating in the ousting of incumbent president Edouard Shevardnadze. The new winds of change engulfed Ukraine the very next year, paving the way for the so-called 'Orange Revolution' of November 2004 and January 2005. This time around, it was not the incumbent president (Leonid Kuchma) but his chosen heir (Victor Yanukovich) who was barred from grapping the reins of power. Following the Georgian blueprint, a stolen election provided the rallying point for the opposition. Finally, in 2005 the phenomenon, which was now termed 'colour revolutions', reached Central Asia. In Kyrgyzstan, discontent with the parliamentary election of February and March inaugurated a period of political turmoil, eventually forcing incumbent President Askar Akayev to step down in the aftermath of the 'Tulip Revolution'. Since then, all of the three countries have improved (i.e., lowered) their respective Freedom House scores significantly. This is illustrated in figure 1.

[114] Not considering the twin exceptions of Belarus and Mongolia, which came into their own much earlier and – as such – were very much included in the respective typological analyses.

Figure 1: Freedom House Ratings for Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine 1991-2005



These are the three cases of political change that I will analyse in this chapter. Also, I will draw some tentative parallels to two other post-communist cases that are, in certain respects at least, relatively similar with regard to the outcome, viz. Slovakia in 1998 and Serbia-Montenegro in 2000. But why not include Russia in this qualitative analysis when it, too, is on the move? I refrain from doing so because I find the events in Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine more open-ended. As Vladimir Gel'man (2006 : 557-558) has argued, Russia is seemingly institutionalising a 'party of power' via the Kremlin's control of the state apparatus. To quote:

> 'This monopoly will lead to the extinction of political opposition, an undermining of incentives for mass participation, and the politicization of the state. Unlike "feckless pluralism", which might be viewed as the protracted growing pains of nascent party systems in new democracies, the monopoly of the party of power is a symptom of a chronic disease. Once established, this monopoly could reproduce itself as long as exogenous factors do not affect the political market and as long as elites are able to maintain their organizational unity'.

More generally, Gel'man emphasises that using a personalistic strategy to create autocracy is both easier and swifter than using a party of power to do so. This equals saying that it is less difficult to base autocracy on persons than on institutions. However, personalistic regimes

have an intrinsic tendency to break down – or at least to oscillate between extremes – as has in fact been seen during the 'colour revolutions'. By definition, and to use the theoretical lingo, such regimes are not 'institutionalised'. This lack of institutionalisation is what interests me in this chapter; which is why I exclude Russia, now seemingly institutionalised, from the investigation.

What can we say about the political developments in Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine? As illustrated in figure 1, the three countries have taken significant strides away from autocracy and towards democracy since 2004. To be sure, only Kyrgyzstan has actually changed class[115] as a consequence of the recent dynamics, viz., from 'autocracy' to 'hybrid regime'. Yet in terms of Freedom House ratings, Georgia has improved its ratings as much as Kyrgyzstan – and Ukraine has even surpassed the improvement of these two countries, lowering its score from 4 to 2.5 in only two years. In fact, Ukraine's most recent Freedom House score is situated only a horse's head from this dissertation's threshold to democracy.

The point I wish to make here is a simple one, to wit that the three countries illustrated in figure 1 indicate that a renewed process of political change has entered what until a few years ago could be construed (or maybe misconstrued) as a 'frozen' political situation. Even though not much has changed with regard to the ordering in the classification of political regime forms, these dynamics questions the longevity of the described post-communist tripartition; and for that very reason they invite a qualitative analysis.

More to the point, the 'colour revolutions' seemingly present two challenges to my findings, both of which are worth mentioning beforehand. First things first, if the present 'colour revolutions' are harbingers of a general process of post-Soviet democratic change, then it undermines the pivotal finding of this dissertation, viz., that the patterns of democracy, hybrid regimes and autocracy are geographically fixed due to prior structural constraints. Second, it also undermines the way I have framed the analysis, i.e., it questions the use of typological theory. For if change is more important than continuity with respect to the longer-term political outcome of the breakdown of communism, then continuous measures (delimiting differences in degree) have a competitive edge over classificatory and typological schemas (delimiting differences in kind).

[115] Recall that in my conceptualisation of the dependent variable, the threshold of 'democracy' is situated at an average Freedom House Rating of 2.0 whereas that of 'autocracy' is to be found at 5.5. Everything in-between falls into the class of 'hybrid regime'.

With respect to the two potential challenges mentioned above, such an approach can be regarded as a variety of what Evan S. Lieberman (2005) terms a 'nested analysis'.[116] The idea is to let a small-N analysis function as a corrective to an antecedent large-N (or medium-N) analysis. Lieberman makes a distinction between a 'model-testing' small-N analysis and a 'model-building' small-N analysis. The model-testing model is used when the large-N analysis delivered robust results, the model-building model when it did not. Obviously, my design comes closer to the former model – since the results of the typological analyses were very robust. Lieberman is keen to point out that the small-N analysis should include countries that are not outliers in the larger analysis. This is what I do in analysing Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan (all of which fitted quite nicely into the typological analyses) – but with a twist. For the point of departure of this chapter is that these three countries are seemingly on the verge of becoming outliers. This is tantamount to saying that this chapter's analysis will be transformed into a 'model-building' analysis in case the three countries turn out to defy the general findings of this dissertation.

This approach will, then, allow me to either i) confirm the findings of the medium-N analysis or ii) revise them in accordance with the causal mechanisms found in the small-N analysis. By extension, it will allow me to retest the value of using typological theory by scrutinizing the fixity (or formlessness) of the hybrid regimes. In an nutshell, if the empirical analysis shows that countries lacking felicitous structural conditions are on the verge of becoming democracies, then it will seriously question my typological findings; and it will question the value of the typological schema as such. Finally – and more particularly – the occurrences in Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine point to a renewed importance of the actors. The structural constraints cannot explain why these political openings appeared all of a sudden. Something else seems to be occurring here and studying these cases may allow us to penetrate the dynamics of hybrid regimes,[117] something I have so far shied away from. Let us begin by framing the problem.

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[116] Notice that Lieberman points to a preliminary statistical analysis whereas mine has been a typological analysis. However, he also indicates that FsQCA – a method that has clear affinities with typological theory – can make up the initial large-N analysis, and he stresses that 20 cases would be enough when performing the large-N analysis. Therefore, my design can clearly be subsumed under this approach.

[117] A number of recent articles advocate putting the spotlight on this intermediate category. To quote Epstein, Bates, Goldstone, Kristensen and O'Hallran (2006 : 566) : 'Whatever one wishes to call them, they emerge from our analysis as critical to the understanding of democratic transitions. More volatile then either straight autocracies or democracies, their movement seem at the moment to be largely unpredictable. One of our major

2. Unfolding the 'colour revolutions'

'Revolution' is really a misnomer. When taken at face value, i.e., when used in its original and hence political meaning, it is something much more violent and protean than what took place in e.g. Ukraine in 2004. To elaborate, the fraudulent Ukrainian elections were met by peaceful protests, the parliament and the constitutional court eventually sided with those demanding a re-run, and the new elections were duly allowed to proceed – and all of this happened without any violence whatsoever. To be sure, the events were considerably more unconstitutional in Georgia and considerably more violent in Kyrgyzstan. That said, subsuming these events under the term 'revolution' appears to be very close to committing conceptual stretching.

More to the point, what the three empirical cases have in common is not the properties of the events as such (which the term 'revolution' indicates). Rather, it is the break with what seemed a stable, semi-authoritarian status quo that is 'like' in these three otherwise unlike cases. Moving to a lower level of generality,[118] it is the 'ousting of a semi-authoritarian leader(ship)' that is the essence. The corollary is that the actual political effects of the 'revolution' in the three countries are not 'like' at all. The said countries are hybrid regimes, but only Kyrgyzstan has actually moved between the classes. Furthermore, Ukraine is situated at the very opposite end of the hybrid regime class – with Georgia in an intermediate position. There is, so to say, a salient difference in degree[119] between the countries, politically. Tellingly, most scholars point to Ukraine as the country with the highest potential, democratically speaking. Contrariwise, Kyrgyzstan habitually gets the bleakest testimony – with Georgia once more in an intermediate position (see, e.g., Hale, 2005 : 163, Fairbanks, 2007, and the Freedom House, 2004-2007).

All that I have said here can be summed up in the following proposition: that the direction of change, not the distance travelled, is similar across the three observations – and that this similarity consists of the ousting of semi-authoritarian power holders. We may re-phrase this with direct reference to democracy. In breaking with a semi-authoritarian status quo, the events in Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine can – and this is unproblematic – be construed as

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conclusions, then, is that it is this category – the partial democracies – upon which future research should focus'.

[118] The most abstract level here is – needless to say – 'political change'.

[119] The premise of any 'differences in degree' is the classification itself, as differences of degree are only possible within, not between, classes.

instances of 'democratic breakthroughs'. What we cannot know, as yet, is whether these breakthroughs will result in institutionalised (aka. self-sustaining) democracy. The former issue concerns the direction of change, the latter the eventual end-point. I will come back to the future prospects at an appropriate stage, i.e., when seeking to answer the question 'Whither?'.

But the answer to the question 'Whence?' is simply this: the three instances of political change all departed from a particular variety of semi-authoritarianism, thus giving them a general similarity of direction. But what are the actual properties of this uniform starting point and therefore uniform outcome (in otherwise diverse cases)? How does such an ousting of a semi-authoritarian leadership come about, i.e., how do we answer the question 'Wherefore?' Finally, and by extension, what does this allow us to conclude about the importance of actor-choices? To answer these questions, we need to revisit the lands of the hybrid regimes.

3. Some thoughts on hybrid regimes in the literature

In an oft-cited *Journal of Democracy*-article from 2002, Thomas Carothers (2002) published a programmatic call to abandon the so-called 'Transition Paradigm'. Carothers's message was simple. Rather than focusing on a hypothetical democratic end-point, it was necessary to unfold the actual properties of the countries hitherto regarded as 'transitional'. The majority of these countries were in fact something different. They were caught in a 'grey zone' – what I have so far termed hybrid regimes – exhausted by one of two sub-phenomena or dysfunctional equilibria: 'feckless pluralism' and 'dominant power politics', respectively.

As we shall see, Carothers may have been too quick in emphasising the stability (i.e, the equilibrium status) of these particular varieties of hybrid regimes – or, at least, of the regime form he termed 'feckless pluralism'. But his more general advertisement for directing attention to the intrinsic dynamics of the hybrid regimes cannot be praised too highly. The preceding chapters have demonstrated that democracy is not easily brought about; seen from the higher ground, its advent is to a large extent dependent upon the structural constraints. Consequently, a number of countries are – at least in the post-communist setting – likely to remain something else than democracies in spite of not being autocracies *tout court* either.[120]

[120] This is the case in spite of the ongoing polarizing trend, i.e., the cross-temporal tendency for the majority of the countries to go to the extremes of democracy or autocracy, cf. chapter 2.

That Carothers struck an interesting note is also reflected in the response to his article. While a number of critics sprang forth (see e.g. *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 13, No. 2), his advice has been heeded by many scholars. Most salient, perhaps, has been the tendency to construe the hybrid regimes as diminished subtypes of authoritarianism rather than diminished subtypes of democracy (as has hitherto been conventional, cf. David Collier and Steven Levitsky, 1997). This new conceptual agenda is, in particular, associated with Andreas Schedler's (2002) concept of 'electoral authoritarianism' and Lucan A. Way and Steven Levitsky's (2002) concept of 'competitive authoritarianism'.[121] In 2006, these three scholars – and a number of kindred spirits – teamed up and produced the book *Electoral Authoritarianism. The Dynamics of Unfree Competition,* edited by the aforesaid Schedler.

So, what is the message of these conceptual revolutionaries? In appendix 1, I have revisited the respective conceptualisations of 'electoral authoritarianism' and 'competitive authoritarianism' in turn, starting with the former. My general conclusion is that these conceptualisations are somewhat problematical and that they cannot make up the pivot for this chapter's analysis. Let us, instead, shift focus from the conceptualisation of these diminished subtypes of authoritarianism (i.e., 'electoral authoritarianism' and 'competitive authoritarianism') to their generic property, the very condition of 'similarity' so to speak.

3.1 The generic property of the diminished subtypes of authoritarianism

According to Schedler (2006b : 8), '[w]hat distinguishes EA regimes from electoral democracies are not the formal properties of political elections, but their authoritarian qualities'. We can concretise this statement even further. As Lucan A. Way has repeatedly, one is tempted to write zealously, stressed, the informal authoritarian qualities of the formal institutions, to which Schedler refers, are not in themselves institutionalised. To quote:

> 'Thus, competitive politics were rooted much less in robust civil societies, strong democratic institutions, or democratic leadership than in *the inability of incumbents to*

[121] That this new conceptual agenda has been influential is underscored by e.g. the following remark from Guillermo O'Donnell's (2007) 'speech of thanks' upon receiving the first Lifetime Achievement Award of the International Political Science Association (IPSA): 'This set of countries can be distinguished in turn, albeit in some cases somewhat hazily, from a third set wherein elections, even if held, are not reasonably fair and many political freedoms are seriously curtailed. These are democracies *pour la galerie,* especially the international *galerie*. They are the 'electoral authoritarianisms' that have recently been drawing much attention in the scholarly literature'. See also Howard and Roessler (2006).

maintain power or concentrate political control by preserving elite unity, controlling elections and media, and/or using force against opponents. The result has been what might be called "pluralism by default"' (Way, 2005 : 232).

Let us stop for a moment to take stock of this point. According to Way, authoritarianism proper has certain undemocratic properties that are being given content through the control and scope of the state apparatus, i.e., that are embedded in certain state institutions.[122] As a diminished subtype, his and Levitsky's regime form of 'competitive authoritarianism' lacks such control and scope, at least to a considerable extent. This point is helpful but even so, the actual posited combination of formal democratic institutions and authoritarian qualities is not very clear. It therefore makes sense to move to a higher level of abstraction, i.e., to extract the more general analytical point.

To reiterate, from a bird's eye view the message of Way is that these regimes are not institutionalised. Paraphrasing Carothers, we may say that these are not dysfunctional equilibria; they are merely dysfunctional. This is not a novel observation with regard to post-communist hybrid regimes. In 2001, Charles Fairbanks described the inherent instability of such regimes and predicted democratic openings once the incumbent presidents were to be replaced.[123] Lilia Shetsova penned down the same observation in a more particular and thus more thoroughgoing analysis of Russia. Quoting:

'In sum, Russia has a hybrid regime, founded on the principle of weakly structured government and relying on both personalistic leadership and democratic legitimacy. This

[122] Quoting Way (2006 : 172): 'Differences among authoritarian states can be understood according to the dimensions of control and scope […] Control refers to the extent to which subordinates obey orders of the executive […] Scope refers to the array of issue areas over which state leaders have discretionary control'.

[123] Quoting Fairbanks (2001 : 54): 'The ex-Soviet political patterns that I have just sketched cannot endure. Throughout Central Asia and the Caucasus, communist institutions and ways are ageing and declining along with leaders formed by the Party apparat and its distinctive ethos. Further change is coming, though it remains to be seen whether it will be sudden or gradual. Leadership successions, already beginning in Azerbaijan and Georgia, open up the easiest path to sudden change. Here democratic change is entirely possible. The decisive moment will be the 'free' elections without which no successor president can claim legitimacy. The elites that have ruled will attempt to manipulate these elections, and the question of how much fraud is too much will become decisive. Popular reaction and Western pressure may decide whether elections are in fact free and fair, and whether the winner is accepted. Democracy, pseudodemocracy, or stateless community cannot be the outcome'.

> combination of incompatible principles enables the regime to develop simultaneously in various directions: toward oligarchy, toward authoritarianism, and toward democracy as well. Yet such a regime can hardly be consolidated; its contradictory tendencies are a sure recipe for instability' (2001 : 67).

As we have seen (cf. the first section of this chapter and the typological analyses of chapters 3 to 5), there are indications that Russia has broken away from the described instability by anchoring authoritarianism in some sort of 'dominant-party'-pattern. But the observation still holds for a number of other post-communist hybrids – as the three 'colour revolutions' showed. Viewed from the higher ground, then, the combination of authoritarianism and lack of institutionalisation is, as a package, *the* defining property of 'competitive authoritarianism'.

As a body politics, it is, at best, a half-baked thing. This particular subspecies of hybrid regime is inherently unstable because power is not based on lasting institutions, e.g., a dominant party or a strong and effective state apparatus. In sum, we are dealing with a regime form that has an inherent propensity to create conjunctures or political openings. However, that only brings us so far. For this implies a long-term prediction only, viz., that these regimes will at some point break down and become something else (which equals saying that they may move in either the direction of autocracy, the direction of democracy, or the direction of another subspecies of hybrid regime).

In short, we have only captured the context, i.e., the scope condition. Notice, though, that even at this point the message arrived at very much represents an antithesis to a commonly voiced conclusion about the 'colour revolutions', viz., that they are exceptions to an otherwise dominant pattern of regime consolidation. This is, for example, what Michael McFaul (2005 : 17) hints at when he writes that '[t]he stars must really be aligned to produce such dramatic events'. Aligned stars are, by definition, a rare phenomenon. Already, this conclusion is somewhat difficult to reconcile with McFaul's own set of cases. He emphasises that 'such events' took place in Serbia in 2000, Georgia in 2003, Ukraine in 2004 and Kyrgyzstan in 2005 (on top of that, one is tempted to include Slovakia in 1998). That is, we have at least four such instances in half a decade. That is quite a lot considering the modest size of the setting. If we set aside the democracies in Central and Eastern Europe – where such breakdowns of semi-authoritarianism do not make sense – then we are left with around

20[124] cases in which 'such effects' were meaningful. If we also eliminate the outright autocracies[125] – where breakdowns have not occurred, probably because the holding regime is much more entrenched – then we are down to about 14. Four out of between 14 and 20 in about half a decade: that's not too bad.

What I have stressed, then, is that such breakdowns are frequent phenomena due to the scope condition, i.e., due to the fact that the clear majority of post-Soviet hybrid regimes are varieties of what I will term 'uninstitutionalised semi-authoritarianism'.[126] But the context only brings us so far. For under which conditions is the lack of institutionalisation likely to result in a breakdown of semi-authoritarianism? Let us see if we can detect the causes (and 'causers') of the colour revolutions.

3.2 Causes of semi-authoritarian breakdown

First, it is worth noting that the identified lack of institutionalisation (the scope condition) owes much to the presidentialism that reigns in these countries. Presidents such as Kuchma, Shevardnadze and Akayev have been (in)famous for bypassing the political institutions, relying on what may best be termed 'patrimonial' or 'patronal' (see Hale, 2005) presidentialism. Such a set-up is, by definition, extremely dependent on the incumbent *as a person*; in particular when he is not backed up by a party-of-power. This brings us closer to the upheavals, out of which the three colour revolutions arose, i.e., to the first trigger of semi-

[124] As described in chapter 2, the institutionalised democracies of the period 2000-2005 (i.e., the countries belonging within the class of 'democracy' throughout this period) were the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. Furthermore, Bulgaria was included in this class in the entire period except the year 2000 (in which it was a 'hybrid regime'), and Romania was included in the entire period except 2004 (in which is was a 'hybrid regime'). Finally, Mongolia was included from 2002 onwards. Preferring to err on the non-democratic side (i.e., to increase rather than decrease the denominator of the arithmetical problem), I only eliminate the former eight countries. Considering that the post-communist setting housed 28 countries in this period (of which I have included 24 in this dissertation), that leaves us with around 20 countries that at least at some points during the period 2000-2004 would (hypothetically speaking) have been possible scenes for a breakdown of semi-authoritarianism.

[125] As described in chapter 2, the consolidated or institutionalised autocracies of the period 2000-2005 (i.e., the countries belonging in the class of 'autocracy' throughout this period) were Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

[126] This species of the genus 'hybrid regime' is the one that interests me in this chapter. Obviously, it does not exhaust the regime type because, as I will explain in detail, it is only to be found in the context of presidentialism. The post-communist hybrid regimes characterized by parliamentarism – e.g. Albania and Moldova – thus do not belong to this class.

authoritarian breakdown. As Henry Hale (2005) has convincingly argued – and as also reflecting the earlier mentioned prediction of Charles Fairbanks – these breakdowns took place at particular points in the political cycles of the incumbent president, viz., when they were on the verge of retiring. To quote Hale (2005 : 135):

> 'A large reason why "revolutions" occurred after controversial elections in Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan but not after controversial elections in Armenia, Russia, and Uzbekistan between 2003 and 2005, then, is that the two sets of countries were in different phases of a cyclical process of elite contestation and consolidation as defined by expectations as to when the incumbent would leave office'.

Differently said, these may not so much have been cases of genuine critical junctures as cases of inter- and intra-elite contestation. Hale (2005 : 142) explains it lucidly when noting that,

> '[o]nce elites form clear expectations as to who will win the struggle, however, they again have an incentive to fall into line behind the new patron, even where the masses had a very prominent role in determining who that is and even when that new patron previously opposed "autocratic methods".

It is important to point out that the political cycle argument of Hale – and in particular what he terms the 'lame duck'-syndrome – is not solely the consequence of constitutional term-limits. It may, he stresses, also be the consequence of severe unpopularity of the incumbent. However, to make this 'trigger' causally meaningful (i.e., to avoid using an at least partially tautological statement owing to the fact that severely unpopular incumbents often do not stand for re-election), I will require that the president has been in power for at least two terms. Better said, the constitutional term limits are the most important factor in the political cycle argument – at least for my purposes – whereas unpopularity is construed as a factor that only becomes relevant in borderline-cases. We will see how this point actually comes to the fore in the case of Kuchma in Ukraine.

Second, the theoretical literature points to the importance of oppositional unity. More generally, the focal point of the conceptualisation of both 'electoral' and 'competitive' authoritarianism is, obviously, 'elections'. When autocracy is not institutionalised, elections always entail some insecurity because an oppositional win cannot be completely ruled out *ex ante*. But to pose a genuine threat – the lack of a level playing ground considered – the

opposition must at the very least come together. In a global analysis of the dynamics of 'competitive authoritarianism', Howard and Roessler (2006 : 380) thus reach the following conclusion:

> 'Our main finding is that the strategic decisions made by the opposition – in particular, the decision to create a coalition or to jointly support a single candidate, despite significant regional, ethnic, or ideological differences and divisions – can have a tremendous effect on the electoral process and its results'.

This is the second 'trigger'. Consequently, we have two positive causes of breakdown. Firstly, that the incumbent is perceived as about to step down (that he is a 'lame duck' due in particular to constitutional term limits), secondly, that the opposition comes together in the context of this window of opportunity. The central hypothesis of this chapter can thus be formulated as follows: *In the context of 'uninstitutionalised semi-authoritarianism' (scope condition), the combination of a lame duck syndrome due to constitutional term limits (trigger 1) and oppositional unity (trigger 2) is a sufficient condition for a breakdown of semi-authoritarianism in the post-communist setting*.

Yet one question obviously remains unanswered. Why are the incumbent elites unlikely to win the election at the end of a semi-authoritarian political cycle in the face of oppositional unity? Of course, such an outcome is not impossible; in fact, it has occurred empirically in the post-communist setting. The alternation between Eltsin and Putin in Russia is a clear case of such a 'continuity-win'. Eltsin was – in every respect – a lame duck when he 'invented' Putin. He was unable to stand again constitutionally, he had preciously little popular backing, and even his physical condition was very bad. Putin, however, quickly became much more popular than e.g. Yanukovich in Ukraine in spite of operating in a relatively similar context.[127]

This popular backing may have been what tipped the scales at the March 2000 presidential election.[128] Assuming that the Russian opposition did in fact come together in 2000 (which Hale, 2005 argues that it came very close to doing), the combination outlined

[127] The context was not completely similar as Putin was made functioning president before the actual presidential elections – and thus emerged as his own man – whereas Yanukovich had to make do with the premiership, sharing power with the unpopular Kuchma to whom he owed his political allegiance.

[128] This is Hale's (2005 : 147) conclusion. To quote: 'Remarkably, it was public opinion that tipped the scales of this elite struggle to the incumbents' side'.

above is not completely 'sufficient', it seems. We could take note of this by inserting a negative condition, viz., that the appointed successor to the incumbent is not genuinely popular. But beyond being very close to a truism – unpopular contenders tend to loose elections if these are partially free – this would disguise the principal rule of post-communist elections: that the odds are in one important aspect in favour of the opposition. Quoting Fairbanks (2004 : 118):

> 'Broadly speaking, elections in the former Soviet bloc follow one of two opposite patterns. Both can be seen as responses to felt victimization at the hands of remote and unchecked political and economic power-holders. Where the yawning uncertainties of post-Soviet life make people feel helpless, the sense of victimization fosters passive acquiescence in authoritarian rule […] Where people feel slightly more secure, as in East Central Europe, there rises an urge to "throw the rascals out". Virtually every party that triumphs in one election is wiped out in the next'.

If we construe 'yawning uncertainty' as a consequence of unchecked and therefore arbitrary and limitless power, then we can extend the prediction about 'throwing the rascals out' to the context of 'uninstitutionalised semi-authoritarianism', i.e., to a context where power is (by definition) fragmented. Differently said, if the incumbent elites are unable to steal the election outright – and this is an attribute of 'uninstitutionalised semi-authoritarianism' as opposed to what may be termed 'authoritarianism proper' – then the opposition has the better chances at the polls in the context of a finished political cycle, even where some fraud is possible. These are the theoretical expectations that I will confront with the empirical reality. But how? A brief methodological discussion is warranted.

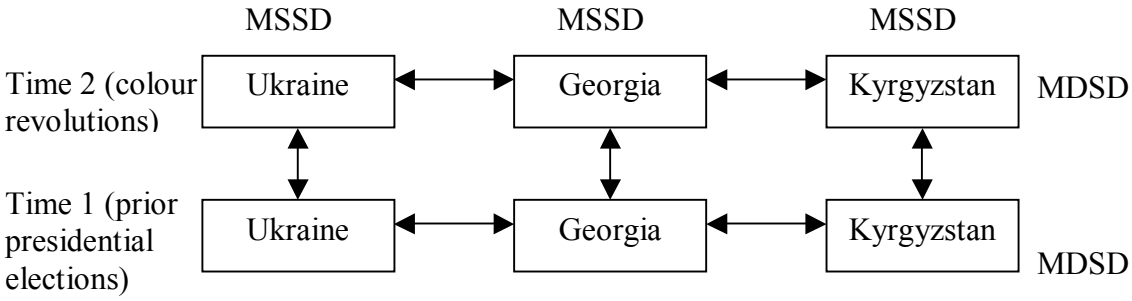
4. A qualitative comparison across time and space

In chapter 3, I warned against using the simple comparative methods of 'most similar system design' (MSSD) and 'most dissimilar system design' (MDSD) on the grounds that they depend on deterministic causation and are unable to appreciate a situation of equifinality. Here – in an apparent *volte-face* – I will in fact employ both of them in a combined cross-temporal and cross-spatial analysis (see figure 2 below).

To be more exact, I will use an MSSD to analyse the temporal changes that paved the way for the 'revolutions' in Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan, i.e., I will seek to identify the critical factor(s) that is dissimilar between T1 (before the event, viz., at the prior presidential

elections[129]) and T2 (at the event, viz., during each of the 'colour revolutions'). Subsequently, I will back this up with a MDSD – a structured comparison of the like outcomes[130] in very unlike cases – at T2, i.e., I will compare the three (quite dissimilar cases) to identify the critical factor(s) which they had in common during the 'colour revolution'. The sketched research design allows me to eliminate factors that are not vital through the MDSD while (re-)confirming those that are in fact vital through the MSSD.

Figure 2: The comparative strategy of the qualitative analysis



To introduce more variation on the dependent variable,[131] I will also (briefly) pair up each of the three countries with relatively similar non-revolutionary neighbours (i.e., with three non-events at T2) in pure cross-spatial (MSSD) analyses. To be more precise, I will pair Ukraine with Russia, Georgia with Armenia and Kyrgyzstan with Kazakhstan.

This means that I am able to circumvent the methodological problems raised in chapter 3. First, the 'many variables, small N' problem is not relevant using a MDSD – as the logic here is one of removing irrelevant factors rather than confirming relevant factors. In other words, it is in itself an objective to include a lot of variables in this design. More generally, the fact that the small-N analysis builds upon an antecedent medium-N analysis diminishes the degree of freedom-problem, also in the case of the MSSD. As Lieberman (2005 : 441) emphasises, '[i]ncreased degrees of freedom are provided by the LNA, and nested analysis should rely on the SNA component to provide more depth than breadth […]'. Second, the

[129] The prior presidential elections make up a suitable frame of reference for the very simple reason that breakdowns of semi-authoritarianism did not occur here.

[130] The like outcome here is the direction of political change and not the consequent political regime form as a clear difference in kind persists between Ukraine and Georgia on the one hand and Kyrgyzstan on the other. I will come back to this distinction.

[131] To compensate for selecting my cases on the dependent variable, something that King, Keohane and Verba (1994) has forcefully warned about.

MSSD analysis will not suffer from truncation on the dependent variable because I am pairing Ukraine, Georgia and Kyrgyzstan with non-'revolutionary' neighbours.

Concerning the order of the analysis, I will first (section 5) perform the empirical analysis of the identified factors, in turn carrying out three cross-temporal MSSDs. Also, I will check whether the cases do in fact fall under the scope condition of 'uninstitutionalised semi-authoritarianism'. Only subsequently (section 6) will I consider alternative explanations using the MDSD.

5. Three longitudinal analyses of semi-authoritarian breakdown

In this section, I trace the changes that facilitated semi-authoritarian breakdowns in the three cases of Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan. Michael Coppedge (1999 : 472) has pointed out that,

> "[t]he longitudinal case study is simply the best research design available for testing hypotheses about the causes of specific events […] it is the ultimate 'most similar systems' design, because conditions that do not change from time 1 to time 2 are held constant and every case is always far more similar to itself at a different time than it is to any other case".

This is what I seek to benefit from here. By implication, the test is one of co-variation – if the identified factors did indeed change with[132] the change in the dependent variable then they have passed the test as explanatory factors. Differently said, I will compare the status on the identified variables at T1 and T2. T1 refers to the three prior presidential elections where the incumbents Shevardnadze (2000), Kuchma (1999) and Akayev (2000) all won the day. T2 refers to the recent parliamentary or presidential elections where the three incumbents (or, in the case of Ukraine, a chosen successor) were ousted. Notice that T1 will basically function as a frame of reference, i.e., I check whether the status on the variables changed between these two points in time. As mentioned, to protect myself against selection bias, I also briefly compare each of the three countries with most-similar neighbours that did not experience a

[132] Because of 'priority', they must of course change before, not after, the change in the dependent variable. As 'triggers', however, the time lag is likely to be relatively short – which is what the word 'with' is meant to convey here.

breakdown of semi-authoritarianism at a (relatively) simultaneous election (i.e., by pairing my events with non-events at T2).

5.1 Georgia and the Rose Revolution 2003

Edouard Shevardnadze guided Georgia out of the civic turmoil that embroiled this Caucasian country after the breakdown of communism in 1989. By the mid-1990s, Shevardnadze occupied a politically peerless position. Throughout his reign as president (he was elected in 1995 and then re-elected in 2000), the government he presided over became more and more autocratic. Yet Shevardnadze was never able to completely institutionalise his hold on power. The various Shevardnadze-administrations were weak as was the state apparatus in general, and the party-of-power that was in fact created (The Union of Citizens of Georgia) split into three fractions in the early 2000s (Mitchell, 2004 : 345, Anable, 2005 : 2).

Still, Shevardnadze retained power for a good many years.[133] In the early 2000s, however, his fortunes began to wane as the political elites positioned themselves for a new era. The reign of the former Soviet Foreign Minister was constitutionally limited to two terms, and the new uncertainty found expression in a number of defections from the Shevardnadze-camp. Future president Mikheil Saakashvili, parliamentary speaker Nino Burjanadze, and the prime minister-to-be, Zurab Zhvania, all broke rank with the President.[134] The lame-duck syndrome, so pertinently identified and described by Henry Hale, was beckoning.

However, and turning to the second trigger, the new and self-proclaimed oppositional figures did not move in sync straight away. The opposition was divided between the more radical United National Movement headed by Saakashvili and the more moderate Burjanadze Democrats headed by Burjanadze and Zhvania. This tension was not resolved when the parliamentary elections of November 2, 2003 took place. Yet the rigged election provided a platform for mutual understanding. First, both parties felt that their votes had been stolen, the United National Movement by not becoming the biggest party in Parliament, the Burjanadze Democrats by not clearing the threshold. Second, exit-polls – the possible presence of which is an intrinsic property of semi-authoritarianism – clearly demonstrated that Saakashvili had the greater popular backing, and this convinced Burjanadze and Zhvania to fall in line behind him.

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[133] Shevardnadze was appointed acting chairman of the Georgian state council back in March 1992.

[134] Saakashvili had been Minister of Justice under Shevardnadze whereas Zhvania had been general secretary of the Shevardnadze pro-Shevardnadze Union of Citizens of Georgia as well as speaker of Parliament.

Shevardnadze seemingly tried to play a last-minute game of *divide et empera* as the electoral commission suddenly changed the tally so that the Burjanadze Democrats did indeed make it into Parliament. To no avail, however. Both parties urged their supporters into the streets. The actual number of demonstrators was quite modest – '[d]uring most of the vigil, crowds were considerably less than 5,000 people' (Mitchell, 2004 : 345) – but the important thing was that the opposition had united. The November-protests ensued, spurring further defections from Shevardnadze's camp. On November 23, Shevardnadze gave in and choose to resign.

Let us finally shift focus to the negative 'most similar' test. What happened – with regard to these variables – in the neighbouring, most-similar non-event of Armenia?[135] Armenia held parliamentary as well as presidential elections in 2003. The incumbent president, Robert Kocharian, was re-elected on March 5, in an election that was – according to observers – marred by fraud. The president was first elected in 1998 and could thus stand for a second period without any inhibitions (see Hale, 2005). The opposition never managed to present a united front, and street protests led by the opposition in early 2004 proved futile. As such, the Armenian case differed significantly from the Georgian trajectory.

5.2 Ukraine and the Orange Revolution 2004

Ukraine under Leonid Kuchma was almost a perfect specimen of what I have termed 'uninstitutionalised semi-authoritarianism' (see also Way, 2005, Dyczok, 2006, Kuzio, 2005a). In the 1990s, Ukraine had experienced something extremely seldom in the post-Soviet setting: a transfer of power due to the electoral defeat of the incumbent, viz., that of Leonid Kravchuk (Diuk, 1998 : 99). Kuchma, for it was he who ousted Kravchuk, tightened his hold on power throughout the 1990s. Striking a strategic alliance with the country's formidable 'oligarchs', he was eventually able to stifle the independent voices of the media. However, Kuchma proved unable to institutionalise power through a lasting 'party-of-power' arrangement. And the so-called 'Kuchma-gate'[136] – which indicated that the president had ordered the murder of critical journalist Georgiy Gongadze – undermined whatever public backing Kuchma may have had.

[135] Armenia has been chosen rather than Azerbaijan because the former is a case of semi-authoritarianism (i.e., a hybrid regime) as well whereas the latter is more thoroughly autocratic, cf. chapter 2.

[136] Also variously known as 'Tapegate' or the 'Cassette Scandal'.

The result of the parliamentary elections of 2002 captures the weakness of an otherwise semi-authoritarian regime. Kuchma ostensibly did everything possible to manipulate the vote, including forcing virtually the entire media to play his tunes. International and domestic observers '[…] called the 2002 elections the worst that Ukraine has seen in terms of government efforts to manipulate the vote' (Diuk and Gongadze, 2002 : 160). Nevertheless,

> '[d]espite all the money, the means of persuasion (whether sophisticated or banal), and the outright illegal manipulations that the presidential forces brought to bear, nearly seven in ten Ukrainian voters opted for the antipresidential side of the spectrum' (Diuk and Gongadze, 2002 : 162).

This was the context in which the 2004 presidential elections took place. Kuchma had secured the right to stand in the election – in spite of constitutional rules to the effect that a president could sit for two periods only. In a disputed ruling, the constitutional court had declared that Kuchma was eligible because his first term began before the inauguration of the constitution, meaning that he had only won one election (not two) under this judicial set-up. This ruling, however, did not exactly create a very solid image of an eligible contender. It came late in the process, and in all events 'Kuchma-gate' had so damaged the president that he did not dare to stand, incumbent-status or not. As such, Ukraine became a prime example of a 'lame duck'-syndrome in the period preceding the election. The majority of the factions supporting Kuchma – i.e., the existing power cliques – instead chose Eastern-based regional boss Victor Yanukovich. But a formidable opposition was gathering in the Western and Central regions of Ukraine.

The disfigured face of Victor Yushenko became a symbol of the will and the sacrifices of the Orange 'revolutionaries', i.e., of the opposition. Yushenko was a former Kuchma-protégé (as was a number of other 'Orange'-leaders). He had served as head of the Ukrainian Central Bank in the 1990s and also had a brief stint as prime minister from 1999 to 2001 on his résumé. Kuchma had chosen him due to his technocratic skills but Yushenko had won genuine political popularity by increasing the tax-intake, reducing wage and pension arrears and presiding over the first episode of economic growth in post-communist Ukraine. The combination of squeezing the economic interests of some oligarchs and gaining popularity seems to have cost him the job. Kuchma did not appreciate the high profile of his second in command and had no qualms dismissing him after Parliament carried through a no-

confidence vote. Yushenko then aligned himself with a newly formed oppositional coalition ('Our Ukraine'), which became the biggest party in the 2002 elections.

After that, Yushenko stood out as the most viable challenger to the Kuchma-camp. Other oppositional figures – the prime minister-to-be, Yulia Tymoshenko, being one of the most prominent – harboured presidential ambitions of their own but stood aside, thus allowing the opposition to unite around Yushenko in the advent of the 2004 presidential elections. The concerted action made it possible for the opposition to portray itself as the voice of the people at large – as opposed to the voice of the holding leadership aligned with Viktor Yanukovych. This was crucial, and so was the combined leadership provided by the opposition leaders.[137] As such, Ukraine, too, passes the MSSD-test with regard to the two operationalised factors.

Let us pursue the influence of these factors through a cross-spatial pairing with a most similar neighbouring country. First things first, which neighbour makes for the better comparison – Russia or Belarus?[138] My contention is that Belarus is too autocratic to make up a proper control for the context of 'uninstitutionalised semi-authoritarianism' (i.e., the scope condition). As such, Russia provides the more suited frame of reference because it too has the characteristics of semi-authoritarianism (or at least had them as it is presently becoming more autocratic). How did Russia fare on the highlighted factors during the latest presidential elections, viz., those of March 2004? First, incumbent president Vladimir Putin was not a lame duck; he could (and did) stand for re-election. Second, no united opposition surfaced. Rather – as already described in the first section of this chapter – since his ascension to power, Putin has created a formidable pro-governmental bloc. In fact, it is possible to argue that Putin's (successful) response to the colour revolutions has been to institutionalise semi-authoritarianism or even authoritarianism proper.

[137] van Zon (2005 : 397) describes the combination thus: 'One condition for the success of an electoral revolution is leadership. This seemed absent in the case of Ukraine because Yushcenko did not exhibit strong leadership, although he was popular. However, through a unique combination of circumstances leadership during the Orange Revolution was first provided by Pora, in organising the demonstrations while later the entourage of Yushcenko and the international negotiating team provided guidance. Yulia Tymoschnko, former vice Prime Minister under Yushcenko, was a charismatic leader for the demonstrators in the Maidan'. See also Karatnycky (2005).

[138] I disregard Moldova in advance due to its miniscule size and non-Slavonic titular nation.

5.3 The Tulip Revolution 2005

Kyrgyzstan is the last stop on our empirical MSSD-tour. In the early 1990s, it was hailed as a beacon of democracy in Central Asia due to the credentials of its reformist president, Askar Akayev. But – as described in chapters 2 through 5 – Kyrgyzstan became more and more autocratic throughout the 1990s. Quoting Collins (2004 : 248),

> '[…] by late 1994 Akayev's ability to transform the system from above, by imposing a democratic ideology and democratic institutions, became increasingly limited. In Kyrgyzstan, limited democratization made greater observation of the regime possible. While Akayev publicly called for discarding clan norms and adopting fair and democratic ones, he found himself increasingly relying on clan support to keep himself in power'.

Still, Kyrgyzstan maintained a much higher degree of political pluralism than her autocratic neighbours, even into the 2000s.[139] Coupled with Akayev's dependence on clans (see Collins, 2004) and the concomitant lack of an institutionalised base of power, we once again arrive at a clear picture of uninstitutionalised semi-authoritarianism. Next, Akayev was not exactly at the top of his game in 2005. He had promised to step down from office when his final term expired that year but the possibility of a dynastical succession was present as both his son and daughter were running for Parliament in that year's elections. This only increased the uncertainty.

Akayev was so weak, politically, that his attempts to influence the parliamentary elections of 2005 failed to a large extent. To quote Radnitz (2006 : 134), '[i]ronically, the parliamentary elections that ultimately led to Akayev's downfall were probably the freest and fairest that Central Asia has yet seen'. As such, the situation was strikingly similar to that of Kuchma in Ukraine prior to the Orange Revolution. Dominated by the two defected Akayev-henchmen, Kurmanbek Bakiev (former prime minister) and Felix Kulov (former vice-president and former mayor of the capital city of Bishkek), an opposition started to emerge as a consequence of the marred election. It did not act *en bloc*, however – in fact, it was not a bloc at all. Nonetheless, the popular protests (and riots) surrounding the parliamentary

[139] As Radnitz (2006 : 138) has noted: 'Actual opposition parties (as opposed to the uniformly tame and propresidential 'oppositions' of neighboring states) have persisted in Kyrgyzstan since independence, even if such parties have revolved around leading personalities rather than programs. The formation of the NDK, possible in Kyrgyzstan's relatively permissive political environment, was the fatal thrust for Akayev'. See also Sari and Yigit (2005).

elections in March 2005 paved the way for a strategic alliance among the oppositional forces: Bakiev became president, and Kulov became prime minister. As such, the opposition did indeed come together, though only belatedly.

Finally, let us, briefly, pair Kyrgyzstan with neighbouring Kazakhstan, the only other Central Asian country which can to some extent be construed as semi-authoritarian rather than authoritarian proper.[140] At the presidential elections of December 4, 2005, incumbent president Nursultan Nazarbayev was re-elected in a landslide victory. He was not a lame duck as no term limits apply in Kazakhstan. Also, the opposition was scattered and feeble – which was demonstrated in failed protests in February 2006 (The Economist, 2006).

5.4 Concluding on the MSSDs

Summing up, the three cross-temporal MSSD-analyses, i.e., longitudinal case studies, confirmed the explanatory value of the two proposed 'triggers'. Also, it confirmed that it makes sense to subsume the three empirical referents under the scope condition. Let us briefly repeat the findings. The context was similar in the three cases, viz., what I have termed 'uninstitutionalised semi-authoritarianism'. This dysfunctional, but unstable, status quo broke down for two reasons.

First, as Henry Hale has so pertinently argued, the lame-duck syndrome was critical. In all three cases, the incumbent presidents were at the end of their political cycles – mostly because of constitutional term limits – and the political elites began a scramble for power. The ensuing state of uncertainty separates the three cases from relatively similar neighbours such as Armenia (at the presidential elections of 2003), Russia (at the presidential elections of 2004) and Kazakhstan (at the presidential elections of 2005).

Second, the new president was found in the ranks of the opposition because the challenging groups were able to get their act together (though not initially in Georgia and only belatedly in Kyrgyzstan). The popular protests – which were very important in forcing the incumbent elites to yield – were the product of this organisational unity (in political diversity, which makes it a notable feat). Once again, this accentuates the differences *vis-à-vis* otherwise relatively similar neighbours.

[140] As Glenn (2003 : 125) points out '[…] it might be more accurate to divide the region into a more democratized northern tier and a less democratized southern tier; the former consisting of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan (because the media is less controlled, and several true opposition parties contest the elections) and the latter consisting of Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan where the media is strictly controlled and political parties are essentially 'Potemkin parties''. See also the Freedom House (2007).

6. Alternative explanations considered

The three cross-temporal MSSD-analyses can be translated into two cross-spatial MDSD-analyses. Once more, the pivot is to be found in the distinction between T1 (the prior presidential elections) and T2 (the colour revolutions).

Within the context of post-communism, the cases of Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan are very dissimilar. Situated in different geographical subregions – and varying tremendously in size – they nevertheless had one aspect in common as early as T1, viz., what I have termed 'uninstitutionalised semi-authoritarianism'. This is the contextual variable, the scope condition to phrase it in the methodological lingo. However, the two triggers were not present back then. First, at the elections of 2000, Shevardnadze was not at the end of his political cycle – and neither was Kuchma at the elections of 1999 or Akayev at the elections of 2000. Second, on none of these occasions did the opposition manage to come together. As Karatnycky (2006 : 29) reminds us in the context of Ukraine – the most advanced of the three countries with respect to oppositional unity – '[a] systematic reformist democratic political opposition did not emerge until the close of the year 2000'.[141]

Not so during the three breakdowns. As described in the preceding sections, the lame-duck syndrome and oppositional unity were in fact salient features in all the three, otherwise dissimilar, cases. As such, and as a corollary of the inferential logic of this comparative method, two cross-spatial MDSDs (at T1 and T2, respectively) (re-)confirm the conclusions of the three cross-temporal MSSDs. However, the logic of MDSD is not one of confirmation (aka. verification) as is the logic of the MDSD. Rather it is one of disconfirmation (aka. falsification).[142] What it allows us, then, is to eliminate rival hypotheses, i.e., to control for third variables. In gist, none of the two identified variables can be eliminated looking through the cross-spatial lens of relative dissimilarity. This, then, is the way of testing alternatives. But which ones are worth testing?

First things first, it is pertinent to revisit the explanatory framework of chapters 3 and 4. Levitsky and Way (2002 : 63) conclude that competitive authoritarianism is a default option,

[141] See also Kuzio (2006 : 60): 'In that round, voters of the left and the right who did not like the government had an easy choice: to vote for the authorities (Yanukovych) or a candidate opposed to the government (Yushenko). It is that factor that made the 2004 elections different from those in 1994 (which was a choice between two branches of the party of power, Kravchuk and Kuchma) and 1999 (Kuchma versus the Communists)'.

[142] For an unrivalled description of this, see Przeworski and Teune (1970).

one that is likely to emerge '[…] where conditions were unfavourable to the consolidation of either democratic or authoritarian regimes'. This is (cf. chapter 5) exactly what characterises the countries that I have grouped as 'hybrid regimes', and in particular the threesome of Ukraine, Georgia, and Kyrgyzstan. As such, the independent variables identified, operationalised and measured in chapters 3-4 elucidate the context of these three cases of semi-authoritarian breakdown.[143] Notice, however, that the respective actor-centred and structural variables do not expound the triggers of the breakdowns – at least not when we take the prior conceptualisations and operationalisations at face value (in section 7, I will not do so but instead bring the factors up to date to account for the future prospects).

This can be demonstrated both by the cross-temporal MSSD ('before' – 'at the event') and a cross-spatial MDSD (at the event). In the former case, the actor-centred and structural variables of the typological analyses do not covariate with the change on the dependent variable as they all date from the early 1990s at the latest (i.e., they are constants). In the latter case, they differ across the three countries and can – that is the logic of the MDSD – be eliminated as explanatory factors. To illustrate this, whereas Ukraine had a full absence on the actor-centred package, Georgia and Kyrgyzstan had a mixed sheet. Contrariwise, whereas Georgia and Kyrgyzstan had a full absence of attributes on the structural package, Ukraine had a mixed sheet (cf. chapter 5). More particularly, not one of the seven independent attributes was present in all three countries (cf. chapter 3 and chapter 4).

Differently said, the combination of MSSD and MDSD allows us to control for the entire body of independent variables employed in the preceding chapters. But that we can eliminate these as explanatory factors is not really surprising. After all, they were only meant to elucidate the pathways away from communism, not renewed dynamics more than one decade down the road. Therefore, we also need to control for more proximate explanations developed in the context of the 'colour revolutions'. Based on my reading of the literature, I have identified two such alternatives. Before describing and operationalising these, it is necessary to point out that I do not include those explanations within the literature the properties of which can be construed as generic features of 'uninstitutionalised semi-authoritarianism'. Let me begin by elaborating on this.

[143] In other words, even though the structural variables do not elucidate the occurrences within the black box of hybrid regime, they can still be said to structure the randomness of the box itself, i.e., the structural constraints may create the very state of flux in which the actors navigate. On such 'structuring', see also Kitschelt (2003 : 75-76).

6.1 Sifting through the literature

Michael McFaul (2005, 2006) has made an interesting attempt to uncover the causes of the 'colour revolutions', first published as an article in the *Journal of Democracy* and subsequently in an edited book on the Orange Revolution. Using the logic of a MDSD, i.e., of eliminating all hypothetical causes that were not present in all of the three cases, he (2005 : 7) identifies the following list of necessary factors:

> 'The factors for success include 1) a semi-autocratic rather than a fully autocratic regime; 2) an unpopular incumbent; 3) a united and organized opposition; 4) an ability quickly to drive home the point that voting results were falsified, 5) enough independent media to inform citizens about the falsified vote, 6) a political opposition capable of mobilizing tens of thousands or more demonstrators to protest electoral fraud, and 7) divisions among the regime's coercive forces'.

Most of these properties are part of my contextual variable (or scope condition) of 'uninstitutionalised semi-authoritarianism'. Beyond obviously including '1) a semi-autocratic rather than a fully autocratic regime', such a context implies the presence of attributes such as '4) an ability quickly to drive home the point that voting results were falsified, 5) enough independent media to inform citizens about the falsified vote […] and 7) divisions among the regime's coercive forces'. Consequently, there is no need to control for these factors. Notice, however, that this verdict depends upon focusing only on the possibility of these attributes being present, i.e., I control for the absence of (effective) restrictions regarding exit polls, alternative media and oppositional rallies. In short, what I mean here is that no outright repression forecloses the opportunity of such mobilization, that is, I control for the absence of outright autocracy, not for the actual behaviour of the actors.[144] Whether such things occur on the ground is a very distinct question that depends on factors such as social learning (e.g. from antecedent oustings of semi-authoritarian rulers). But my purpose is only to test for the context as such.

The promoted argument holds for a number of other factors identified by the literature on the colour revolutions – especially when we include the trigger variables of the regime cycles

[144] Obviously, my trigger of 'oppositional unity' does measure actor behaviour rather than just the scope for such behaviour. But this is a much more general factor (and much more difficult to bring about) than the majority of those mentioned by McFaul. Differently said, my point here is simply that the factors highlighted by McFaul are likely to occur under the scope condition if the opposition unites.

and oppositional unity as well (which is also necessary to cover two of McFaul's above-mentioned factors, viz., '3) a united and organized opposition' and '6) a political opposition capable of mobilizing tens of thousands or more demonstrators to protest electoral fraud'. Let me give some further examples. Graeme Herd (2005 : 8) proposes the following 'root causes' in his analysis of the colour revolutions: 'Government strength, opposition strength, popular frustration, civil society and media'. The first, fourth and fifth cause is part and parcel of 'uninstitutionalised semi-authoritarianism', the second is covered by my variable of oppositional unity, and the third is – I have argued with the assistance of Fairbanks – a generic characteristic of post-communism, i.e., a constant.

In an analysis of the Rose Revolution, David Anable (2005 : 2) likewise direct attention to such a list of factors, viz.,

> '[…] one, a weak and unpopular state authority; two, a credible opposition able to attract mass support; three, an active civil society, especially enough independent media to inform and mobilize support; and, four, passive or divided security forces'.

Again, factors one, three and four[145] are covered by my contextual variable whereas two is a function of oppositional unity.

Then there is Lincoln Mitchell's Georgian analysis. He (2004 : 345) proposes that

> 'A number of factors were at play, not least the fundamental weakness of Shevardnadze's administration, resulting from his failures as president. But most critical were Georgia's vibrant civil society; the sometimes ambiguous role of the international community, US and European governments, and private foundations; the opposition's belated unity; and the destructive role played by the Revival party and the Ajaran authorities'.

To reiterate a now tiresome argument, the first and second factors are properties of semi-authoritarianism[146] – and the fifth, although idiosyncratic to Georgia, can also be construed

[145] 'Passive and divided security forces' are characteristic of the lack of institutionalization of authoritarian rule – in this situation, their effectiveness and cohesiveness are first and foremost dependent upon incumbent strength.

[146] The same can be said about Kyj's, (2006 : 79) emphasis on the spread of internet access and Copsey's (2005 : 104) emphasis on a relatively independent Supreme Court.

as such as it is an extreme manifestation of state weakness. The second is covered by the variable of oppositional unity.

Are there, then, no genuinely alternative explanations on the market place of ideas? There are – one of them in fact represented by the third factor on Mitchell's list, which I refrained from commenting upon. The international dimension has in fact been highlighted by a number of scholars (e.g. Åslund and McFaul, 2006, Kuzio, 2005b), the argument being that a combination of Western linkage and leverage has facilitated the three breakdowns of semi-authoritarianism. I will test this argument by scrutinizing the presence (or absence) of international pressure during the three instances of semi-authoritarian oustings.

Second, Lucan Way (2005 : 233) has argued that the presence of what he terms 'anti-incumbent national identity' is critical to oust a semi-authoritarian leader in the post-Soviet context. To quote:

> 'In Alyaksandr Lukashenka's Belarus and Vladimir Putin's Russia, greater regime closure was facilitated both by relatively weak anti-incumbent national identity and by the leaders' success in either preserving (Belarus) or reasserting (Russia) the de facto scope of state power over economic actors. By contrast, in Moldova and Ukraine, stronger anti-incumbent national identity and the lower scope of state control over economic actors undermined authoritarian consolidation, as successive oppositions mobilized pro- and anti-Russian national identities against successive incumbents'.[147]

This factors should be checked, too. Thus, I will also scrutinize the presence (or absence) of anti-incumbent national identity in the context of the three instances of semi-authoritarian oustings. With this in mind, let us travel to the post-communist setting.

6.2 An empirical analysis

Regarding the international dimension, Georgia seems to support the notion that foreign pressure can play an important part in bringing about a breakdown of semi-authoritarianism (in this case the Rose Revolution of 2003). Shevardnadze had been a darling of the international aid community due to the political credentials he achieved in the 1980s.

[147] Notice that Way is explaining the antecedent political competitiveness of the 1990s. I have extended the argument to the 2000s.

However, his prolonged stint of semi-authoritarianism had undermined the Western backing by 2003. As Fairbanks (2004 : 116) emphasises:

> 'On November 20, the U.S. State Department issued a press statement insisting that the results "do not accurately reflect the will of the Georgian people, but instead reflect massive fraud". As a Radio Free Europe-Radio Liberty analysts pointed out this "was the first time ever that the U.S. has openly accused the leadership of a former Soviet republic of rigging an election"' (see also Mitchell, 2004 and King, 2004).

In short, foreign pressure is a variable, too, and the status on it changed to the disadvantage of the incumbent prior to the Rose Revolution of 2003, thus seemingly paving the way for the breakdown. We can, then, confirm the relevance of this factor in the Georgian case.

In the Ukrainian case, matters are a trifle more tricky. On the one hand, many scholars have emphasised that international support was critical to the outcome of the Orange Revolution. First, long-term economic and technical assistance had worked to strengthen the Ukrainian civil society, thus providing a context for the popular protests. Second, short-term pressure from the US and a number of EU-countries was vital in branding the second round of the presidential elections as stolen and in mediating the eventual compromise between Yushenko and Yanukovich (Kuzio, 2005b). On the other hand, it is often emphasised that both the actual financing and the organisation of the 'Orange' protests were home-grown. Quoting Karatnycky (2006 : 40):

> 'Although Western financial support had provided training and supported election monitoring, exit polls, and civic-education work, the various components were strictly non-partisan, and the Yushchenko campaign was financed entirely by Ukrainians'.

What do we conclude? According to my reading of the literature, the Ukrainian case does not allow us to eliminate the factor of international pressure – it seems to have been important even though the domestic side of the coin may have mattered more. In short, this factor passes the test, albeit less convincingly than in the Georgian case.

Finally there is Kyrgyzstan. Some foreign pressure was certainly put on Akayev in 2005 (see, e.g., Transitions Online, 2005 : 4) – but nothing that matches the events in Georgia and

Ukraine.[148] There is thus little evidence that international pressure was critical in the Kyrgyz case. This obviously weakens the status of this factor in accounting for the three instances of semi-authoritarian breakdown.[149] In sum, international influence does not pass the test because it did not seem vital (i.e., present) in the case of Kyrgyzstan.[150]

Enter anti-incumbent national identity. Again, things can be said in favour of this argument. In Ukraine (in 2004), there is no doubt that the areas with a strong Ukrainian national identity (i.e., Western and Central Ukraine) voted overwhelmingly for Yushenko – and against the perceived Russian meddling on behalf of Yanukovich. The reaction against Russia's blatant support for autocratic incumbents (Herd, 2005 : 6) has been an almost ubiquitous phenomenon in recent post-Soviet elections, and it can be said to underpin Way's causal factor. Also, the argument seems able to travel to the Georgian case where Saakashvili deliberately (and consistently) rallied his supporters around an anti-Russian (and hence pro-Georgian) stance.

Then there is Kyrgyzstan, however. Once again, it does not really fit the picture. It has been argued that Walt Rustow's 'background condition' of national unity does not even obtain in Kyrgyzstan (Glenn, 2003 : 140), i.e., that national identity is absent at large. More to the point, the Tulip Revolution cannot be construed as a 'national rising' aimed against Russia. It was, in a nutshell, a conflict between competing regions and competing clans. Bearing the idiosyncrasies of Kyrgyzstan in mind, one may by now feel tempted to question the relevance of the Kyrgyz case per se (i.e., challenge the 'likeness' of the three cases). But travel to Slovakia in 1998 or Serbia in 2000 for a moment and the case for anti-incumbent national identity unravels. In fact, both Vladimir Meciar and Slobodan Milosevic promoted a picture of themselves as ardent nationalists. As such, the case for the criticalness of anti-incumbent identity is severely weakened – we are therefore free to eliminate both of the alternative explanations.

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[148] Also, in the world of today it is difficult to imagine any salient standoff (in particular one involving riots) between a government and an opposition during an election, which would not be accompanied by international responses.

[149] Notice that a hypothetical comparison with negative cases also questions the explanatory power of this factor. More concretely, foreign pressure did indeed play out during the re-election of incumbent Alexander Lukashenka in March 2006. It proved ineffective, however. As such, including Belarus as a 'most-similar referent' to Ukraine would weaken the international explanation.

[150] Obviously, the international factor may still have been important in e.g. Georgia. If so, then we have a case of multiple causation, something that my comparative design does not allow me to appreciate.

7. Whither?

I have now arrived at an explanation of the 'Colour Revolutions' and have also controlled for alternatives. The 'Wherefore?' has thus been taken care of – all that is let now is the 'Whither?'. As already mentioned, the analysis of this chapter has challenged the caution of e.g. Michael McFaul. Rather than being the consequence of a very complex constellation of factors, the three recent post-Soviet cases of semi-authoritarian breakdown are, arguably, the consequence of the mutuality of only two factors which are (at least each on their own) relatively frequent phenomena: a lame duck syndrome and a united opposition. As such, the hypothesis stated earlier in this chapter has been confirmed, at least when only scrutinizing the three colour revolutions and the three most-similar non-events.[151]

Notice, however, that the constraining factor is not to be found in these two 'triggers'. Political cycles do come to an end when some kinds of elections (and formal democratic constitutions) are in place, and during such windows of opportunity oppositional forces are often able to unite. Rather, the frequency of these instances of political change is held down by the contextual variable – or scope condition – of 'uninstitutionalised semi-authoritarianism'. Where the authoritarian rulers are able to institutionalise their grip on power, e.g. through a genuine 'party of power' or an effective state apparatus, such breakdowns are not likely to occur. Differently said, where institutionalised mechanisms lock in an authoritarian regime form, change is not to be expected. Also, as already mentioned, where democracy proper is in existence, the event in itself becomes nonsensical.

However, the analysis has pointed to a very different set of political limitations. Following Hale, it has questioned the democratic future of the three colour revolutions. The political cycle-argument posits that these events are first and foremost alternations on power; one elite replaces another in the context of semi-free elections. This in no way guarantees a democratic outcome in the longer run; rather it predicts a return to the unstable point of departure once the new president succumbs to the 'authoritarian temptation' that is always present where open politics are not anchored in effective political institutions. But is it impossible to escape this vicious – or at least barren – political circle? If we include the case of Slovakia in 1998 as the first instance of such a breakdown of semi-authoritarianism, then

[151] When I mean to imply with this qualifier is that the combination of the two triggers and the scope condition may not be a sufficient condition for breakdown in the post-communist setting at large. This, however, must be checked empirically – but that lies beyond the scope of the present chapter.

the answer is a resounding 'no'. Having ousted Vladimir Meciar, Slovakia consolidated democracy virtually overnight. However, if included, Slovakia constitutes the odd man in of the five empirical referents (Serbia-Montenegro in 2000 also counted).

First things first, this Central European country was not characterised by 'patrimonial presidentialism' – in fact, it was not characterised by presidentialism at all (cf. chapter 3). Meciar may have invented some species of the genus 'patrimonial prime ministerism', if such a construct is allowed for, but power was still vested in Parliament. Secondly, Slovakia had very promising prospects of EU-membership. In fact, weakening the bid for membership seems to have been what led to Meciar's undoing and made the opposition come together (Vachudova, 2005 : 158). Third, on deeper structural attributes such as economic development and the prior regime form, Slovakia belonged in a very different category from the post-Soviet countries analysed in this chapter. In sum, then, we violate the denotative definition (cf. chapter 1) by counting Slovakia before 1998 as a case of 'uninstitutionalised semi-authoritarianism'.

But by saying this, I have also indicated that factors such as these make it possible to escape this particular subspecies of hybrid regime form and cross the threshold to the class of 'democracy'. This is also why I – parting ways with Hale – have allowed for the term 'democratic breakthrough'. The breakdown of semi-authoritarianism does present a shift in favour of democracy but the character of the future regime form is a very different matter. This proposition can be elucidated with reference to the general distinction between actors and structures. In a nutshell, I have argued that the actors may, as the colour revolutions demonstrate, break with a semi-authoritarian holding leadership. However, whether the outcome is institutionalised democracy very much depends on the deeper constraints. With this in mind, let us revisit, first, the actor-centred independent variables and, second, their structural counterparts to identify any changes in the Georgian, Ukrainian and Kyrgyz status on attributes *such as these*. The last qualifier is meant to indicate that I now reinvent or at least update the actor-centred and the structural factors – i.e., measure them at a different point in time and, to some extent at least, in a different guise.

7.1 Listening to the wind of change

The three colour revolutions (i.e., breakdowns of semi-authoritarianism) can obviously be construed as a new species of the genus 'replacement of incumbents' – the former of my two actor-centred attributes. However, the very fact that such replacements also took place during the initial elections (of the early 1990s) in two of the three countries, viz., Georgia and

Kyrgyzstan, questions the notion that this should suffice to move a country into the class of democracy (as does the preceding analysis more generally).

More interesting, then, is the second actor-centred attribute, i.e., the presence of a strong legislature. The status on the constitutional variable is – at least in the state of political flux characterising very many post-Soviet countries – changeable.[152] And, in fact, we do find significant changes here, changes that pit Ukraine against Georgia. After being elected to the presidency with a massive 96 per cent of the votes in the January 2004 elections, Mikheil Saakashvili further increased the powers of Georgia's already strong presidency. Fairbanks (2004 : 118) writes:

> 'A series of hurried amendments – passed by a cowed Parliament over objections voiced personally to Saakashvili by democratic NGO's and other backers of the Rose Revolution – has pumped up presidential power and left Parliament and the courts almost without independent power. Shevardnadze's "superpresidential" constitution is now Saakashvili's "hyperpresidential" constitution'.

Other observers have delivered the same verdict, also stressing that Saakashvili deliberately defied the agents of civil society and the Western powers, i.e., the very actors who supported him during the Rose revolution. This concentration of power, Jaba Devdariani (2005 : 2) notes, '[…] has both frustrated the opposition and ensured that much of Georgia's politics is conducted within the government'.

What a difference it makes shifting focus to Kiev. The tie between the two self-declared victors – Yushenko and Yanukovich – was only solved by a bargained compromise, reinvigorating a prior proposal of outgoing President Kuchma. The compromise included a provision to strengthen Parliament at the expense of the presidency. The constitutional provisions were duly voted through Parliament. Consequently, and critically, Ukraine has moved from presidentialism to semi-presidentialism (or even to parliamentarism proper). According to the theoretical expectations presented in chapter 3, such a move should facilitate democracy. More particularly, it should eliminate the political cycle described by Henry Hale. To quote from his (2005 : 163) account:

[152] Whereas the variable is quite stable in long-standing Western democracies because – and this is what sets Western European countries apart from post-Soviet – it is institutionalised.

> 'Ukraine may in fact point to a "democratic" exit from the cycles: when the Yushcenko-Yanukovych standoff was at its peak in late 2004 and neither side was sure of a clear victory in the power struggle, the Yanukovych team agreed to let the final elections decide the outcome in return for a major political reform. This reform aimed to reduce the winner-take-all nature of Ukraine's presidency, shifting some powers to parliament and potentially creating a balance of power that could give opposition forces and independent media greater political cover even when the president is not a lame duck'.

Ukraine's notable improvement in her Freedom House scores, reported at the outset of this chapter, is, then, not so much a consequence of the policies of a reform-minded president – as seems to be the case in e.g. Georgia. Rather, it is the consequence of institutional changes forced upon a president with strong democratic credentials. That sounds like a recipe for success.[153]

Kyrgyzstan has not really ventured into the constitutional arena at all, i.e., the landlocked Central Asian country has retained its strong presidency. However, in Kyrgyzstan, constitutional problems of another kind abound. The Tulip Revolution was completely unconstitutional and the new president, Bakiev – elected with a whopping 90 per cent of the votes after the forced resignation of Akayev – has not done much to reinvigorate the rule of law (see Sari and Yigit, 2005 : 2).

When it comes to changing the status on the actor-centred variables in favour of democracy, Ukraine is thus in a league of her own. Let us shift focus to the structural attributes – and the status on the affiliated variables. Most of these cannot really be altered in

[153] In an interesting attempt to explain post-communist political variation, McFaul (2002) has, invoking M. Steven Fish's findings that only clear-cut displacement of incumbents paved the way for democracy, argued that the post-communist setting questions the emphasis on the benign effect of elite-stalemate espoused by the Transitology-literature. To quote: 'Balance, stalemated transitions – those most likely to facilitate the emergence of democracy-enhancing pacts in Latin American and Southern Europe – have instead led to unstable regimes of both democratic and the autocratic variety in the postcommunist world' (221). Notice how the institutional outcome (i.e., the constitutional compromise strengthening Parliament) of the stalemate between Yushenko and Yanukovich once more seems to support the lessons of Transitology – at least with respect to the balance-of-power argument. Notice also that McFaul's treatment of the evidence is contested by e.g. Vachudova's (2005) argument that even though a clear-cut oppositional win at the initial elections was a precondition for what she terms a 'liberal' pattern, a second precondition was that a transformed communist parties stayed on the scene and ensured ongoing political competition, i.e., a balance-of-power was in fact needed initially as well.

the short run. In fact, the prior regime form is exclusively a thing of the past and cannot be altered at all. Much the same can be said with reference to ethnic-linguistic homogeneity; at least in the absence of systematic cleansing or large-scale and selective migration. Of course, inter-ethnic settlements between the titular nation and the minorities can depoliticise ethnic rifts. One may argue that this has happened in Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan where the Russian minority has definitely been co-opted. Still, I have already eliminated the ethno-linguistic factor due to its (general) lack of explanatory power, and it is not convincing to predict a democratic future with reference to it.

Then there is economic development. This factor can obviously change; in fact, in the modern world it is seldom constant over time. More concretely, in the case of Ukraine it has actually been argued that the economic growth of the 2000s did improve the conditions for the breakdown of semi-authoritarianism in 2004. Witness Karatnycky's (2005) observation to this effect:

> 'Ukrainian society was also experiencing profound changes of its own, including the rise of a significant middle class in Kiev and other urban centers. In 2002, thanks in part to the ongoing effects of policies enacted by Yushchenko when he was prime minister, GDP grew by 5.2 percent; the next year, it increased 9.4 percent; and in 2004 it grew by 12.5 percent. From 1999 to 2004, Ukraine's GDP nearly doubled. Although this growth mostly benefited a narrow circle of oligarchs, it also spawned many new millionaires and a new middle class. These new economic forces resented the latticework of corruption that constantly ensnared them – from politically motivated multiple tax audits to shakedowns by local officials connected to business clans'.

Seen from the higher ground, however, the general direction of economic change in Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan has, and uniformly so, been one of decline. In Georgia, the 2003-GDP per capita was situated at around 41 per cent of the 1989-level; in Ukraine, the matching number was 56 percent; in Kyrgyzstan, it was 70 per cent.[154] It is very difficult to see how an economic development such as this may benefit the three countries politically. Rather, it has hindered the prospect of democratisation. Obviously, this fact does not rule out that a process of 'bourgeoisification' or 'genteelification' – as described by Karatnycky – has been occurring since growth picked up in Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan in the late 1990s.

[154] My calculations on the basis of the *World Development Indicators 2005* (2005).

But, to reiterate, it seems faulty to explain the breakdowns of semi-authoritarianism with reference to economic trends that have by and large been negative.

That leaves the EU. In both Ukraine and Georgia, the oppositional camp skilfully played the 'European card', i.e., depicted itself as the stalwart champions of integration with the EU during the contested elections. In Ukraine, Yushenko espoused a clear pro-European platform, and Saakashvili also emphasized his intensions to strengthen the western ties at the expense of the eastern (or, literally, northern). The incontrovertible fact that a future EU-membership although unlikely at present is not a foregone thing,[155] strengthens the democratic prospects in these two countries – at least in comparison with those of Kyrgyzstan. Also, the 'neighbourhood' policies of the EU will probably include some kind of a deal for the two countries.

All this creates what Milada Anna Vachudova (cf. chapter 4) terms the 'passive leverage' of the EU. Passive leverage is basically a function of the political and economic benefits of membership and of the reverse side of the coin, i.e., the cost of exclusion. 'Active leverage', on the other hand, is the deliberate conditionality exercised in the EU pre-accession process, i.e., it only comes to the fore when actual membership negotiations are initiated. Predicting the future is always a hazardous matter but actual membership negotiations do not seem realistic at present (see Vachudova, 2005 : 248 and Gallina, 2005 : 195). What the relationship will lack, then, is what Vachudova terms 'enforcement' and 'meritocracy'. All that is left of her three EU-affiliated mechanisms is 'asymmetry', reflecting the brute fact that the EU has the better hand. And that, in turn, is a recipe for shattered expectations, not for institutionalising democracy.[156]

7.2 Summing up

Where does this leave us? From a bird's eye view, Ukraine seems to have a clear competitive edge when it comes to the democratic potentials. This is, particularly, the consequence of

[155] As both Ukraine and Georgia are geographically situated in Europe, the most basic premise for applying for EU-membership.

[156] Notice in this context that Vachudova (2005) clearly emphasises that the passive leverage of the early 1990s was not sufficient to change the illiberal political and economic pattern in states such as Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia. To do so required the active leverage that kicked in only after the membership-negotiations were initiated in the mid-1990s.

having abandoned presidentialism,[157] yet the European anchor also speaks in favour of Ukraine. At the reverse end of the spectrum, we find Kyrgyzstan. Beyond the ousting of the incumbent, nothing indicates that this Central Asian country will be able to break the shackles of uninstitutionalised semi-authoritarianism and the affiliated political cycles (see also Fairbanks, 2007 : 55-56, Collins, 2004 : 253, Radnitz, 2006: 133).

Georgia falls in the middle. Saakashvili's decision to further strengthen the presidency makes for a lingering 'authoritarian temptation' (I have borrowed this term from Fairbanks, 2007 : 55-56). Differently said, the democratic future of Georgia very much depends on Saakashvili as a person rather than on the political institutions. European anchorage or not, that does not seem a viable solution, not least when considering the track record of these countries. As Fairbanks reminds us: 'Kuchma in Ukraine, Gamsakhurdia and Shevardnadze in Georgia, and Akayev in Kyrgyzstan all appeared at one time to have accomplished a shift to democratic rule, only to yield to authoritarian temptations' (Fairbanks, 2007 : 55. See also Hale 2005 : 164). Whether Saakashvili will resist the temptation or not cannot be told in advance – but an institutional anchorage of democracy is not present.

This is the answer to the question 'Whither?, then. Ukraine looks able (though in no way predestined) to move into the democratic fold. Georgia is likely (though not predestined) to linger as a specimen of 'uninstitutionalised semi-authoritarianism': sometimes more democratic than authoritarian, sometimes more authoritarian than democratic, in line with the general political vicissitudes. Finally, Kyrgyzstan is very likely (one is tempted to write 'predestined' here) to stay in the dysfunctional status quo or even embrace authoritarianism proper.

But, the reader may speculate at this point, what about the remaining hybrid regimes of the post-communist setting? It is appropriate to leave off with a few words on the general situation. In gist, I have argued that 'electoral revolutions', such as occurred in Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan, are likely outcomes in a particular part of the post-communist setting, to wit the hybrid regimes characterised by 'uninstitutionalised semi-authoritarianism'. To reiterate, then, the extension of this phenomenon (i.e., the scope condition) restricts the prospects of such events. But there is more to it than that. For it may work the other way around as well. The frequency of such events may affect the prevalence

[157] Recall that a basic premise of liberal democratic theory is that laws, not men, rule – and this requires political institutions rather than the personal authority of a patrimonial president.

of the regime form itself (i.e., the number of empirical referents characterised by the scope condition).

In fact, there are indications that causality flows in this direction, too. The 'colour revolutions' have not been ignored in the rest of the post-Soviet setting. Besides bringing direly needed optimism to oppositional forces beyond the borders of the three countries, it has alerted the former brothers-in-arms of Shevardnadze, Kuchma and Akayev, i.e., the remaining post-Soviet semi-authoritarian rulers. More to the point, it seems to have convinced presidents such as Vladimir Putin in Russia, Aleksandr Lukashenka in Belarus and Islam Karimov in Kazakhstan that the uninstitutionalised species of the genus 'semi-authoritarianism' is intrinsically unstable (and thus dangerous for the incumbent and his henchmen). I have already – with the assistance of Vladimir Gel'man – argued that Putin has enjoyed a remarkable success institutionalising his authoritarian rule via a party-of-power and by reining in the Russian governors. But the point has a wider application. Quoting Silitski (2005 : 84):

> 'Veteran leaders of former Soviet republics have openly vowed to avert democratic revolutions in their own countries. They directly attribute the downfall of their Georgian, Ukrainian, and Kyrgyz counterparts not only to activities orchestrated by the international democracy-promotion community, but also to the inherent weaknesses of unconsolidated authoritarian regimes. As many surviving autocratic leaders see it, the great mistake of their fallen colleagues was to tolerate social and even political pluralism, believing that it would furnish them with a respectable democratic façade without endangering the stability of their regimes. The lesson drawn by the autocratic survivors is simple: They must step up repression'.

If these endeavours are successful – and, to be sure, that is a big 'if' – then it will change the status on the contextual variable. More particularly, it will limit the scope for breakdowns of semi-authoritarianism, a scope that is already quite narrow as relatively few post-communist countries now belong within the hybrid regime type (see chapter 2). As such, the 'colour revolutions' form part of an iterated game, the outcome of which is nebulous because of the basic premise of social science: that the actors are also observers and reshape the game as it is played.

8. Conclusions

We have reached the end of the road. The purpose of this chapter was to re-test the conclusions of the large-N (or medium-N) analyses of chapters 3 to 5 using a small-N equivalent. As a nested analysis, the chapter has not questioned the general findings of this dissertation. In fact, it has substantiated the difference in kind between the democracies in Central and Eastern Europe and the hybrid regimes of the post-Soviet setting. This equals saying that the analysis has on the whole been a genuine specimen of the species 'model-testing' – rather than an exercise in 'model-building'.

In gist, the conclusion of this chapter is that most of the (now rather few) post-communist hybrid regimes are likely to remain variants of what I have termed 'uninstitutionalised semi-authoritarianism'. The current breakdowns of this regime form – epitomised by the three 'colour revolutions' of 2003, 2004 and 2005 – first and foremost seem to be the results of intra- and inter-elite competition in the context of a concluded presidential political circle. After these openings, a return to the old, yet unstable status quo is beckoning in Kyrgyzstan and Georgia. Ukraine is the only possible exception as institutional changes may hinder it from relapsing into the vicious circle – but not even Ukraine can be said to have turned the corner yet. Differently said, in most of the hybrid regimes, no general causal mechanism points to a genuine (i.e., self-sustaining or lasting) actor-induced breakthrough in the immediate future. The fact that the improvement in Freedom House scores has levelled off in 2006 (cf. figure 1 of this chapter) provides tentative support to these conclusions.

On the general level, continuity is thus more likely than change. How does this conclusion square with the lack of institutionalisation, and matching instability, that I have argued characterise the hybrid regimes? This is where the logic of a classificatory and typological schema is worth revisiting. I have underlined that such taxonomic constructs are most relevant where some kind of boundedness – systemic or not – characterises the empirical referents. To translate the conclusion of this chapter into the classificatory lingo, we may say that the 'colour revolutions' have created renewed differences in degree within the class of hybrid regimes, not differences in kind (which would entail consistent movement between the classes). In other words, what we have is formlessness given, or within, a particular form, viz., that of the hybrid regimes.

Appendix 1. A discussion of the dominant conceptualisations of the diminished subtypes of authoritarianism

A. Electoral authoritarianism

Andreas Schedler (2002 : 37) proposes '[…] to fill the conceptual space between the opposite poles of liberal democracy and closed authoritarianism with two symmetrical categories: electoral democracy and electoral authoritarianism', thus creating a 'fourfold typology' as illustrated in figure A.

Figure A: Schedler's fourfold typology of political regime forms[158]

Liberal Democracy	Electoral Democracy	Electoral Authoritarianism	Closed Authoritarianism

This arrangement of what appears to be one-dimensional 'quasi-types' overlaps with the classification of political regime forms crafted in this dissertation, the only difference being that 'hybrid regime' has been split into the twin categories of 'electoral democracy' and 'electoral authoritarianism'. However, when reading through the conceptualisation, it quickly becomes clear that matters are a bit more complicated than that. For Schedler in fact operates with two conceptual dimensions, viz., the familiar distinction between the electoral and the liberal attribute. To quote:

> 'The distinction between liberal and electoral democracies derives from the common idea that elections are a necessary but not a sufficient condition for modern democracy. Such a regime cannot exist without elections, but elections alone are not enough. While liberal democracies go beyond the electoral minimum, electoral democracies do not. They manage to "get elections right" but fail to institutionalize other vital dimensions of democratic constitutionalism, such as the rule of law, political accountability, bureaucratic integrity, and public deliberation' (2002 : 37).

Whether a country is democratic thus depends on the electoral dimensions only;[159] whether it is also liberal depends on the liberal dimension. Differently said, the liberal property –

[158] My representation on the basis of Schedler (2002).

[159] Whereas Diamond stresses that it also depends on the liberal dimension, cf. chapter 1.

combining 'the rule of law, political accountability, bureaucratic integrity and public deliberation'[160] – becomes an adjective only. But, one naturally wonders, how is Schedler able to make a distinction between two regime forms that are both electoral without being liberal? Compared to that of Larry Diamond (cf. chapter 1), the novelty of his conceptualisation is that he divides the electoral dimension into a trichotomous classification rather than merely a dichotomous classification. Three 'electoral' possibilities seemingly exist: i) elections take place and are free and fair, meaning that they 'comply with minimal democratic norms';[161] ii) elections take place but are not free and fair, implying that they do not comply with minimal democratic norms; iii) elections do not take place, obviously indicating that they do not comply with minimal democratic norms. The first instance is one of democracy whereas the latter two are separate instances of authoritarianism.

All of this is independent of the liberal dimension, i.e., elections can be free and fair in the absence of the liberal property. The liberal property only serves to make a distinction between 'liberal democracy' and 'electoral democracy' in the instances where elections did take place and were free and fair. When substructing (cf. Lazarsfeld and Barton, 1951) the consequent typology we end up with the following property space:

Figure B: The full typology of political regime forms

	+ Liberal property	- Liberal property
Free and fair elections	Liberal Democracy	Electoral Democracy
Elections that are not free and fair	[Liberal Electoral Authoritarianism]	Electoral Authoritarianism
No elections	[Liberal Authoritarianism]	Closed Authoritarianism

[160] It should be noted that this is a very broad conceptualisation of the liberal property. In fact, one may argue that 'political accountability' and 'public deliberation' reflect entirely different properties from those I have so far emphasised as 'liberal'. As such, Schedler's definition is much too encompassing to be useful empirically – there is no clear negation, so to speak. I will, however, ignore this problem and merely concentrate on Schedler's general message here.

[161] Quoting Schedler (2002 : 38): 'In the common phrasing, elections must be 'free and fair' in order to pass as democratic. Under electoral democracy, contests comply with minimal democratic norms; under electoral authoritarianism, they do not'.

Schedler only spells out the four types mentioned in figure A, but all of the six types illustrated in figure B logically belong in his property space. I have [bracketed] the two types he does not mention himself and named them by either letting the adjective 'liberal' complement (resulting in 'liberal electoral authoritarianism') or replace (resulting in 'liberal authoritarianism') the adjective used in the horizontally adjacent type ('electoral authoritarianism' and 'closed authoritarianism', respectively). However, Schedler opts for an even higher degree of complexity than that captured by figure 2. His second novelty is to construe elections as 'bounded wholes'. Emphasising seven requirements for free and fair elections, he (2002 : 41) stresses that,

> 'Elections may be considered democratic *if and only if* they fulfil each item on this list. The mathematical analogy is multiplication by zero, rather than addition. Partial compliance with democratic norms does not add up to partial democracy. Gross violation of any one condition invalidates the fulfilment of all the others. If the chain of democratic choice is broken anywhere, elections become not less democratic but undemocratic'.

Consequently, the threshold between 'free and fair elections' and 'elections which are not free and fair' (and, by extension, between 'electoral democracy' and 'electoral authoritarianism') is razor-sharp. Only countries that clear all the seven criteria pass this threshold, i.e., only countries that perform extremely well, electorally, become either 'liberal democracies' or 'electoral democracies' (depending on the presence or absence of the liberal property).

How does Schedler provide operational definitions for the said types? This is the weakest link in this otherwise interesting taxonomic exercise. In his *Journal of Democracy*-article from 2002, Schedler (2002 : 47-48) uses Larry Diamond's most recent scoring of regime forms (cf. figure 2 in chapter 1) to this effect. To quote:

> 'His [Diamond's] regime typology differs from my own in one respect: He introduces finer distinctions in the space between electoral democracy and closed authoritarianism. We reserve this space for the broad category of "electoral authoritarianism," while he divides it three ways—into ambiguous regimes, competitive authoritarianism, and uncompetitive authoritarianism' […] "Ambiguous" regimes, of course, are harder to classify. Assigning them to either side of the democratic-authoritarian divide involves a certain dose of arbitrariness. Preferring to err on the authoritarian side, and thus to

> classify democratic regimes as nondemocratic rather than the other way around, I count as electoral democracies only those ambiguous regimes listed by Diamond that show average Freedom House scores lower than 4.0 (Indonesia, Mozambique, and Paraguay). All others I sort into the electoral authoritarian box'.

But this is obviously faulty. As is also indicated by the quote, Diamond uses the average Freedom House ratings to classify the empirical referents. In chapter 1, I hammered home one simple point: that using this average does not allow us to make a distinction between the electoral and the liberal dimension. And this, *a fortiori*, goes for Schedler, too, cf. the discussion above. His actual scoring is thus not viable considering his property space.[162]

These logical problems are aggravated by Schedler's ingenious conceptualisation of free and fair elections as bounded wholes.[163] For if only countries which do not fall short at all are allowed to cross the electoral threshold, then – extrapolating from the empirical analysis of chapter 1 – the type 'electoral democracy' (i.e., free and fair elections in the absence of the liberal property) will be virtually empty. Likewise, as Schedler (2002 : 38, 48) also points out, since there are not very many cases of 'closed authoritarianism' left (i.e., countries holding no elections at all and lacking the liberal property), 'electoral authoritarianism' is likely to become a residual category, one housing almost all the countries that are not 'liberal democracies'. Differently said, even an operationalisation that does in fact appreciate

[162] In a later contribution, Andreas Schedler (2006b : 11), the following operationalisation is offered: 'For example, we may (quite safely) classify as electoral authoritarian all those regimes that (1) hold multiparty elections to select the chief executive as well as a legislative assembly and (2) earn average Freedom House ratings between four and six'. Once again, Schedler uses the average Freedom House ratings to identify 'electoral authoritarianism', rather than making a distinction between the electoral and liberal dimension. Also, using such a high (i.e., undemanding) threshold does not square well with construing 'free and fair elections' as bounded wholes – for in this case it is possible to become an 'electoral democracy' in spite of having a rather poor score on the electoral dimension.

[163] Also, it is difficult to see the validity of treating elections as 'bounded wholes'. In doing so, Schedler pays his dues to Collier and Adcock (1999). However, Collier and Adcock (559-560) are keen to stress that the notion of bounded wholes in the case of democracy is only profitable when the absence of any of the attributes completely undermine the democratic character of the regime. That this should be the case for all of Schedler's seven criteria is difficult to accept.

Schedler's conceptual distinction[164] – and relies on Freedom House Ratings as he does – is not likely to be very valuable empirically. Bearing these conceptual and empirical problems in mind, let us move on to Levitsky and Way to see if they have more to offer.

B. Competitive authoritarianism

Levitsky and Way (2002) spend more time describing the defining properties of the regime type 'competitive authoritarianism' than they do unfolding the underpinning property space. However, implicitly they do outline the matching taxonomic exercise, and I will try to distil and reproduce it. Their (2002 : 53) definition of democracy proper is the following:

> 'Modern democratic regimes all meet four minimum criteria: 1) Executives and legislatures are chosen through elections that are open, free, and fair; 2) virtually all adults possess the right to vote; 3) political rights and civil liberties, including freedom of the press, freedom of association, and freedom to criticize the government without reprisal, are broadly protected; and 4) elected authorities possess real authority to govern, in that they are not subject to the tutelary control of military or clerical leaders'.

Once again, an electoral definition (criteria 1, 2 and 4) is seemingly combined with a liberal definition (the freedom rights of criterion 3 which also – conveyed by the words 'broadly protected' – implicitly assume the presence of the rule of law). The liberal dimension does not preoccupy the two scholars much, however; it is the electoral counterpart that constitutes the heart of the new concept. 'Competitive authoritarianism' must, we are told, be distinguished from unstable regimes that nevertheless meet a minimum definition of democracy, e.g., what O'Donnell terms 'delegative democracy'. This paves the way for the following definition:

> 'In competitive authoritarian regimes, by contrast, violations of these criteria are both frequent enough and serious enough to create an uneven playing field between government and opposition. Although elections are regularly held and are generally free of massive fraud, incumbents routinely abuse state resources, deny the opposition

[164] By this, I mean an operationalisation that does in fact make a taxonomic distinction between the electoral and the liberal property, *in casu* using the Freedom House scores for 'political rights' (the electoral property) and 'civil liberties' (the liberal property), rather than collapsing them using the Freedom House average.

adequate media coverage, harass opposition candidates and their supporters, and in some cases manipulate electoral results' (2002 : 53).

This regime form must, then, be separated from cases of 'full-scale authoritarianism', a regime type in which incumbents either do not allow elections or reduce them to a mere façade. Finally, Levitsky and Way stress, 'competitive authoritarianism' must be distinguished from other forms of hybrid regimes, e.g. regimes in which the military has a decisive formal say or rights are only effective for a minority.[165]

So, what is it that Levitsky and Way have done here? It is not too lucidly described but as I read the article, the electoral and liberal dimensions are simply collapsed. Differently said, the liberal property – the broad protection of civil liberties, including freedom of the press, freedom of association and freedom to criticize the government without reprisal – is construed as a necessary condition for 'free and fair elections'. Hence, we have only one dimension, along which Levitsky and Way carve out at least four classes. This is illustrated in figure C.

Figure C: Levitsky and Way's fourfold typology of political regime forms

Democracy Proper	Delegative Democracy and other such varieties	Competitive Authoritarianism	Full-scale Authoritarianism

Levitsky and Way's conceptualisation – though very imprecisely stated – thus empirically has more to offer than that of Schedler. In collapsing the electoral and liberal dimension, they merely augment the classification of democracy which I arrived at in chapter 2. This means that the proposed types probably divide the countries between them in a relatively even manner since – as the two dimensions are collapsed – there is no problem with the two dimensions correlating (which would mean that the cases clump in typological polar types). However, Levitsky and Way provide no operational definitions, at least not in the said *Journal of Democracy*-article. Hence, we cannot apply this construct directly to the real world.

[165] These latter instances are not very interesting empirically, and I will overlook them when reproducing the property space.

Chapter 7. Fiscal sociology and the legacies of state formation[166]

The typological analyses of chapters 3 to 5 constitute the systematic large-N (or at least medium-N) research agenda of this dissertation. Contrasting the competing approaches to explaining post-communist political diversity, I reached a simple but clear conclusion. The geographical tripartition between democracies, hybrid regimes and autocracies that locked in throughout the 1999s cannot have been caused by the 'voluntaristic' choices of actors alone. To paraphrase Herbert Kitschelt, we need to dig 'deeper' than that, i.e., we need to uncover the structural origins of post-communist diversity.

What I have basically done, then, is to affirm the empirical value of what at the most general level is by necessity a 'legacies-approach' to post-communism (on 'legacies' and post-communism, see Ekiert and Hanson, 2003). The variables measuring the initial level of modernization and the character of the prior regime form thus both capture antecedent legacies. The prospects of EU-membership obviously constitute the 'odd man out' of the threesome. However, as it basically discriminates between the countries in a like manner on the spatial dimension, this makes little difference. If we keep viewing the situation from the higher ground, then the legacies relevant to post-communism logically derive from one (or both) of two periods: communism and pre-communism.[167] Since the breakdown of communism, scholars emphasising legacies have pinned their faith to either of these. Let us try to take a closer look at some of the approaches on offer in the literature.

1. Legacies-approaches to post-communism

In the early 1990s, Ken Jowitt (1992) famously warned about the pernicious political consequences of the 'Leninist legacy'. By the end of the same decade Valerie Bunce (1999) pointed out – with a deliberate emphasis on diversity rather than uniformity that was a virtual antithesis of Jowitt's analysis – that the socialist past, and the paths of extrication it offered each country, appears to be the key factor accounting for the present economic and political variation. Finally, Grzegorz Ekiert (2003) has presented a more elaborate account of the importance of the socialist past.

[166] This chapter builds on Møller (2007c) and Møller (2007d). For an earlier – and much less developed – version, see Møller (2005).

[167] 'Pre-communism' is here construed as a residual category that captures everything that went before communism.

Moving to pre-communist legacies, Samuel P. Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations* presents the most notorious contribution. The very notion of competing civilizations points to a distant cultural line of demarcation, a formative period in which the various civilizations crystallised and moved their separate ways. More recently, and as already mentioned, Herbert Kitschelt has made a less categorical distinction between legacies of pre-communism. Also, he has extended the causal chain into the communist era. Emphasising the presence (or absence) of a formal-rational bureaucratic state apparatus and the presence (or absence) of a vibrant civil society before the advent of communism, Kitschelt demonstrates how this variation produced four different regime forms under communism – viz. 'bureaucratic-authoritarian communism', 'national-accommodative communism', 'patrimonial communism', and 'colonial periphery' – a diversity that has then, to a very large extent, been reproduced during post-communism (see Kitschelt, Mansfeldova, Markowski and Toka, 1999, Kitschelt and Malesky, 2000, and Kitschelt, 2003).

But who has more to offer here? First and foremost, it is quite obvious that any legacies dating from before communism must be traced into (and throughout) the communist period; otherwise the causal chain has a missing link. Having said that, in which of the two periods should we, in general, seek the roots of the post-communist diversity – i.e., the ulterior process of diversification?

Simple logical reasoning may lead us some of the way. First, Jowitt's description of the uniform legacy of the Leninist past simply does not square with the spatial variation identified in the preceding chapters. Jowitt posits that the area has what he terms a 'catholic' point of departure, a 'sameness' or even 'universalism'. The only variable creating diversity that he allows for seems to be Western influence (1992 : 304-305). Jowitt's general focus on uniformity does not carry with it an expectation of inter-subregional differences (although it does of course predict intra-subregional similarities) and can thus be disregarded or even disconfirmed on the basis of the inductive observations of the preceding chapters.

Bunce and Ekiert have more to offer in this regard. Both of them emphasise that the communist period was very much characterised by diversity – and that this diversity has been reproduced after 1989-1991. In both instances, the mechanism of reproduction pointed to is Fish's 'initial election'-variable. The outcomes of the elections can, the argument holds, be traced to the particular properties of the socialist path, and this outcome has then locked in the respective post-communist outcomes. To quote Ekiert (2003 : 111) on the dividing lines of communism,

> ‘The initial experience of transitions shows that the most successful East Central European countries share common historical legacies. First, all these countries had a history of major political conflicts and political reforms. As a result they were more liberal in the declining years of communism than their neighbors […] Second, the extent of marketization and economic liberalization prior to the end of communist rule was larger. These countries had a relatively large private sector and many state-owned firms had cooperated with Western firms or produced foods for Western markets. Third, these countries had pragmatic communist elites and/or substantial political and cultural opposition. Finally, these countries had stronger ties to the West’.

These factors – and the corresponding causal chain leading through the initial elections – strike me as very convincing. But, and referring back to my arguments in chapter 5, the highlighted factors still seem too ‘proximate’ to constitute ‘root causes’. In brief, no account is given as to how the combination of intra-subregional similarities and inter-subregional differences that also characterise the ordering on these attributes has come into existence in the first place. Bunce and Ekiert simply beg the question, Which ulterior attributes lie behind the diversity of the state-socialist past?

This is a general problem, and it naturally brings us to the legacies of pre-communism. It is not possible to refute Huntington outright. After all, the dividing lines between civilizations that he describes are very much those reproduced politically today. However, as Kitschelt has argued, when using structural factors to explain post-communist diversity, it must be possible to link these anterior factors to the posterior outcome via a causal mechanism that touches upon human actions. The causal chain must, to paraphrase, not be excessively long; it must be able in a convincing way to work through postulates about the beliefs and experiences of the actors. Otherwise, the structural explanations are simply too deep to be convincing. This requirement represents a shield against infinite regress into the recesses of history – which is appropriate since all explanations could otherwise be construed as too ‘close’ to the explanandum, relatively speaking.

To illustrate this argument, Kitschelt touches upon Robert Putnam’s (1993) influential study of democratic processes and performances in northern and southern Italy. Putnam’s attempt to trace the present properties of regional-level democracy back to the division between centralised Norman rule (in southern Italy) and municipal or republican governments (in central and northern Italy) in the twelfth- and thirteenth-century is flawed, Kitschelt (2003 : 64) asserts, because ‘[n]o mechanism translate the ‘long-distance’ causality

across eight hundred years into a more proximate chain of closer causal forces acting upon each other'. If such a chain did in fact exist, it should be possible to intercept it in, e.g., the eighteenth-century and thus demonstrate how it is linked to present-day affairs; but Putnam does not do so. In short, the cause is so far removed from the effect that the causal mechanism is virtually impossible to establish. One should not overextend oneself causally (and thus temporally), so to speak. What is important for our purposes is that Huntington's emphasis on religion and competing civilizations does not embed such causal mechanisms – and is therefore faulty. In fact, Huntington does not demonstrate how the civilizational lines of demarcation played out during communism; he does not demonstrate how they lingered on up to 1989-1991.

Kitschelt himself has more to offer in this regard. As already noted, he develops a causal chain extending from pre-communist patterns of state formation – captured by the properties of the bureaucracy and the properties of civil society – to communist regime forms to the scope of actor-choices after the breakdown of communism. On a more general level, I repeated (and expanded) this exercise in chapter 5 when I linked the structural factors to the political regime-outcome via the actor-centred attributes. That is, I argued that the structural point of departure to a large extent shaped the potential for competitive politics at the breakdown of communism and, through this, favoured one regime form over another, especially in the longer run. In this chapter, I will (re-)test the virtues of Kitschelt's particular explanation by engaging in an exercise that is more about descriptive than causal inference.

The claim of the 'legacies'-approach promoted by Kitschelt (et al, 1999) is the following: that the properties of the state apparatus and the properties of the state-society relations during communism shaped the political destiny of post-communism. These 'communist' regime properties, in turn, reflect pre-communist patterns of state formation. Let us try to rephrase this by moving to a higher level of abstraction. In brief, Kitschelt's argument is that the actor-choices of post-communism were – at least to a very large extent – endogenous to the dominant legacies of state formation across the setting, and in particular to patterns preceding the communist era. Differently said, the political outcomes depended upon inherited state capacity and the inherited strength of the civil society. I have tested this by ordering the countries on the attribute of the prior regime form in chapter 4. But Kitschelt's basic premise is that legacies are something that survives over time, even in the face of totalitarian and democratic junctures. Hence, it also makes sense to order the post-communist countries according to state capacity and state-society relations after the transitions of 1989-1991; and then see how this bears upon the political outcomes.

As a package, I will simply term these two attributes 'state capacity'. This may seem faulty but my reasons for doings so will become clear in the subsequent sections. But how do we know state capacity when we see it? In a remarkable turnaround, state capacity has become the talk of town within both the academic study of regime change and the developmental business. Back in the early 1990s, the so-called 'neo-liberal' current within Economics – which was then the flavour of the day – voiced a very different claim with regard to state capacity in the post-communist setting. A strong officialdom, the argument went, was if not outright pernicious then at the very least insidious to economic growth. With regard to economic development, government was seen as part of the problem, not part of the solution (see Åslund, 1992, Sachs, 1993, and Boycko, Shleifer and Vishny, 1995). And it did not stop there. The state was also construed as one of the greatest threats to the civil and political rights that liberal democracy is all about. The message was that only a genuine programme of privatisation and liberalisation could pave the way for a virtuous circle of politics by empowering the 'liberal-minded' strata of society (e.g. the conclusion in Boycko, Shleifer and Vishny, 1995).

Today, these claims are presented in a much softer voice. It is not that they have turned out to be wrong as such. Oftentimes, red tape, corruption and wasteful public projects do in fact crowd out productive behaviour and lead to noticeable economic dead-weight losses. Also, the bloated machinery of government is all too often abused to silence the opposition and transgress the rights of the individuals. Having said that, the anti-statist literature of the early 1990s ignored (or at the very least underemphasized) what is today hailed as a crucial fact: that the very prerequisite for both a market economy and a democracy is a capable state, one that is able to sanction the economic and political rules of the game (see, e.g., Linz and Stepan, 1996, Fukuyama, 2004, and Hellman, 1998). Accordingly, a number of indices of state capacity have been crafted, especially under the auspices of the World Bank (in particular Kaufmann, Kraay and Mastruzzi, 2005), to measure this resource.

Some of these indices are quite elaborate; state capacity is in these cases construed as a multi-dimensional resource. Others have simply zoomed in on a particular property. As already mentioned, to use Kitschelt's variable in the guise that they term 'bureaucratic rectitude' as a control variable, Jeffrey S. Kopstein and David A. Reilly (2000) employ the level of corruption as a proxy. This is not really what 'state capacity' (or, rather, the lack of state capacity) should connote, I would object.[168] To give a seemingly silly but still logically

[168] But notice that Kitschelt (1999 : 14) himself indicates that it can be used as such.

sound example, this means that 'state capacity' – or 'bureaucratic rectitude' – is perfect where no state apparatus exists. For in such a case, no public corruption is, by definition, possible. More to the point, the scope of the state is likely to impact on the level of corruption as a larger state provides more levers for such behaviour.

Turning to other indices, the complexity of the more elaborate ones is often unwarranted. Needless to say, it makes perfect sense to emphasise Weberian properties such as the autonomy of the bureaucracy, the ability to follow general rules rather than arbitrary rules, meritocratic recruitment and the like. But in reality the matter is, I will argue, quite simple. As the political philosopher and statesman Edmund Burke noted in his famous *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, '[t]he revenue of the state is the state'. Better said, at the most general level, state capacity and revenue-extraction are virtually synonymous. If a state is capable of taxing its citizens, then it is capable in general.

Also, as I will explain below, if it is capable of taxing its citizens then this entails (or, better, mirrors) a felicitous pattern of state-society relations, the second of Kitschelt's twin properties. I will cling on to this; which equals saying that – when considering state capacity – I will ascend the ladder of abstraction and emphasise revenue-extraction only. And this brings us back to an intellectual current that flourished a century ago but is today almost forgotten.

2. Fiscal sociology – the mirror of society

Fiscal sociology – or *Finanzsoziologie* as the original German name reads – has an impressive pedigree, tracing its ancestry back to the flourishing academic milieu of *Mitteleuropa* in the first three decades of the 20th century. The term was coined by the Austrian academic Rudolf Goldscheid (1958 [1925]), and it was picked up by his compatriot Joseph Schumpeter (1991 : 101) who in his classic essay on 'The Crisis of the Tax State' recommended an investigation of fiscal history with the following words: 'He who knows how to listen to its message here discerns the thunder of world history more clearly than anywhere else'.

As was his wont, Schumpeter's words are almost epic. That seems only fitting, however. What is at stake here is nothing less than the ordering of human relationships, particularly the question of which financial set-up provides for the existence of a well-working commonwealth. Concretely, Goldscheid and Schumpeter were preoccupied with the future of the Austrian tax state – with the place of the state within the order of property in society – given the burden of debt from the First World War. Their answers to the ever-haunting

question 'What is to be done?' differed significantly, however. Where Schumpeter wanted to levy a capital tax to root out the debt, Goldscheid wanted to re-capitalise the state.

These prescriptions – and the discord between the two – need not trouble us here. More interesting is their descriptive consensus on the internal dynamics of the state. The character of the state depends upon the character of the public finances, the simplest version of the argument goes. In this regard, Goldscheid and Schumpeter are very much of the same ilk. Both of them stress that the state itself does nothing; it is a tool used by particular groups (see Goldscheid, 1958 [1925] and Schumpeter, 1991 : 111, fn. 20). It is, to borrow Goldscheid's (1958 [1925] : 210) apt phrase, this 'State within the State' – 'to describe *its* laws and to look for norms to cover *its* requirements' – that is the epicentre of fiscal sociology. In other words, the shape of the state, be it liberal or autocratic, is very much an internal question. In this light, the public finances become the very mirror of society because they form the battleground where the struggles for control of the state are fought out.

That leads us to the strong historical relationship between the sustainability of effective taxation and the sustainability of certain rights. This relationship seemed obvious to contemporary scholars, and political actors, during the birth of European liberalism. John Carteret, one of the great 17th-century English statesmen, explained it prosaically in his statement that '[t]he Security of our Liberties are (sic) not in the Laws but by the Purse being in the Hands of the People' (quoted in Brewer, 1989). We encounter it on the Continent as well, witness the following quotation from Guido de Ruggiero's (1927 : 54-55) classic *History of European Liberalism*:

> 'As a general rule, heavier taxes can be raised in proportion as the subject enjoys more liberty; as liberty decreases taxes must be diminished. In free States heavy taxes are counterbalanced by liberty; in despotic States the lightness of the taxes is a compensation for the loss of liberty'.[169]

Also, contemporary actors to a large extent perceived the French Revolution to be a consequence of the financial bankruptcy of *l'ancien regime*. This was what Mirabeu referred

[169] Witness also the even earlier (and even more categorical) assertion of Lorenz von Stein (1958 [1885] : 30): 'The full flowering of taxation, however, occurs only when the will of a people, acting through legislation, confers upon the State the right to intervene in the economy. Taxation is not yet present when the exaction of contributions is based merely on the need of an autocratic State; we can speak of taxation only when these levies come to be based on the needs of the life of the community'.

to when on the very eve of the Revolution, he declared that: 'The nation's deficit is the nation's treasure' (quoted in Ash, 1990 : 135). Finally, it was recognised on the other side of the Atlantic where the slogan of the American independence movement was 'no taxation without representation'.

Goldscheid and Schumpeter harboured great expectations on behalf of fiscal sociology – but their hopes were dashed. After the 1920s, the genre more or less fell into oblivion. Certain aspects of the current have, however, made a comeback during the latest decades. The two bodies of theory captured under the headlines of 'sectoral analysis' and 'the rentier state' emphasise some of the same mechanisms as fiscal sociology; though the scholars associated with these approaches have not claimed that they were heirs to the Goldscheid's and Schumpeter's body of work.

First, the sectoral argument – in its most general guise – posits that the sectoral makeup of the economy can have detrimental political (and economic, but I am not interested in those here) effects. These in turn depends on i) the *character* of the dominant sectors and ii) the *extent* to which these sectors dominate. In brief, unsophisticated sectors often promote a vicious circle of industrial downgrading while very dominant sectors (especially when they are also unsophisticated) hinder the establishment of a level political field, in particular through the fiscal dependency on this sector. The sectoral analysis has been applied to developmental countries in general, and political scientists such as Michael D. Shafer (1994) and Terry Karl (1997) have delivered some very incisive politico-economic analyses from this point of view.

Second, the rentier state argument is more directly preoccupied with taxation. It was born as an attempt to explain the surprising – given the relative high level of overall economic development, i.e., given the insights of 'modernisation theory' – lack of democratisation in the Middle East. Quoting Michael L. Ross (2004 : 232):

> 'The 'taxation produces representation' claim is most commonly invoked today by Middle East specialists who reason that the ability of the region's autocrats to finance themselves with non-tax revenue – primarily through oil revenues – has enabled them to avoid pressures to democratise'.

As Ross indicates, the focal point of the rentier state approach is the dependency on natural resources, and oil in particular, which characterise these economies. Such dependency, the argument goes, has adverse political consequences. In brief, if the ruling elites can extract

economic rents from natural resources then they i) are economically independent of the citizens and ii) can even buy off – bribe – the citizens into political passivity. Obviously, the odds do not favour the exchange of rights for revenue in such a situation.[170] This explanation is currently making headway in analyses of the post-communist setting as well – not least due to the stunning (and increasing) importance of natural resources for the economies of Azerbaijan, Central Asia, and Russia (for an example of the attempts to include this factor into analysis of post-communism, see Skaaning, 2006).

This sketchy presentation of the two theories shows that the sectoral approach is less closely related to fiscal sociology than the rentier state approach. More to the point, the sectoral argument delivers a value-added product. Its focus on sectoral asymmetries, including the consequent fiscal asymmetries of the state, is very valuable and presents a novel track compared to the current of Goldscheid and Schumpeter. However, it is a focus that can only indirectly[171] be linked to Kitschelt's liberal-bureaucratic legacy and I will not pursue the argument here. The rentier state argument, on the other hand, links up with the very mechanisms identified by fiscal sociology. In fact, the rentier state approach can be completely captured by the 'representation for taxation'-dictum. Bearing this in mind, I do not see the value added by this perspective. It directs attention to natural resources but the underpinning causal mechanism is still that of revenue-extraction (not of resource-extraction *per se*). More felicitous, then, is the pure fiscal perspective. An attempt to revive it has recently been carried out by Mick Moore (2004) in the article 'Revenues, State Formation, and the Quality of Governance in Developing Countries'. Moore's (2004 : 298-299) focal point is the so-called fiscal (social) contract proposition; that

> '[…] there is a causal connection between (1) the dependence of governments on broadly levied taxes, rather than other sources of revenue, and (2) the existence of the kinds of binding constraints on governments and institutionalised political representation that constitute the foundations of liberal democracy. Very crudely, relative to other types of states, tax states will tend toward accountable, representative government'.

[170] The premise of this argument is of course that the ruling elites prefer the certainness of autocracy to the uncertainness of democracy (i.e., uncertainness with regard to staying in power). On this premise, see Holmes (2004 : 21).

[171] It can be indirectly linked because a felicitous legacy of state formation provides a better point of departure for a felicitous economic development, also with regard to the sectoral makeup.

Moore here describes the basic causal mechanism of fiscal sociology. Notice in this connection that fiscal sociology is preoccupied with solving one of the pre-eminent dilemmas of political theory: that the state is both the prerequisite and the greatest threat to political and civil liberty. Quoting Holmes (Holmes, 1995 : 270), 'statelessness means rightlessness' because the alternative to the state is anarchy: a situation of complete arbitrariness. However, at the same time, the state – and this brings us to the crux of the matter – is traditionally the adversary of political and civil rights. Historically, the state has constituted that whip of power which has been used to subdue the people, often in the name of some higher idea. We are thus left with a Gordian Knot which fiscal sociology offers to cut by emphasising the *quid-pro-quo* between rights and revenue.

As with any such bargain it is very difficult to decide the direction of causality. Does the presence of broad-based taxation cause the presence of democracy or is it the other way around? Answering this question is no picnic. But notice that a statement concerning causality is not a precondition for listening to the lessons of fiscal sociology – at least not for our purposes. As Schumpeter (1991 : 101) so pertinently pointed out more than 80 years ago, '[…] even greater than the *causal* is the *symptomatic* significance of fiscal sociology'. Looking through the lenses of this analytical device, it is possible to diagnose the state of affairs in a given commonwealth. Let me try to rephrase this point in order to appreciate Kitschelt's legacies-approach.

If Kitschelt's liberal-bureaucratic legacies of state formation are in fact requisites of democracy (when present) or autocracy (when absent), then we should logically find a strong relationship between rights and revenue in the post-communist setting. For this is tantamount to saying that we expect democracy and a certain legacy of state formation (one the results in a high degree of contemporary state capacity) to go together. In gist, a 'tax state' is a state characterised by both an effective bureaucracy and relatively even state-society relations – for these are preconditions for trading rights for revenue.

To relate the assertion about rights and revenue directly to the conceptualisation of democracy put forward in chapter 2, a post-communist state capable of taxing its citizens is expected to provide for the described package of electoral and liberal rights (i.e., to be a 'democracy') whereas a state incapable of doing so is not expected to provide the package of electoral and liberal rights (i.e., to be an 'autocracy'). Finally, a state with intermediate taxing abilities is expected to linger in a state of limbo with regard to the package of electoral and liberal rights (i.e., to be a 'hybrid regime'). This equals saying that taxation is not so much the cause as the concomitant of democracy – and thus that descriptive rather than causal

inference is needed to test the relationship. This is the purpose of the subsequent two sections.

3. Democracy and taxation in the post-communist setting

Let me now try to elucidate the fiscal and political paths traversed by the post-communist countries in the first decade after the genesis of 1989-1991. Needless to say, the expectation is that the two paths will correlate strongly; that the presence of a tax state will go hand in hand with the presence of democracy.[172]

I have already operationalised and classified the dependent variable of the political regime form. What we need in addition is to operationalise and measure the fiscal variable, i.e., the extent to which a given post-communist country is a 'tax state'. According to Moore, the pivotal distinction with regard to taxation is that between broad- and narrow-based. With respect to the post-communist countries, I cannot capture this dichotomy because the available data is not very fine-grained. Hence, I will place focus on a more general level: on tax-intake as a proportion of GDP. The justification for doing so is straightforward. Where the tax-intake as a proportion of GDP is relatively high, taxation is likely to be broadly levied as the state must be sponsored by a plurality of sources to achieve this level of revenue. On the contrary, where the tax-intake as a proportion of GDP is relatively low, taxation is likely to be narrowly levied as the state can be sponsored by a few sources only. Also, and harking back to Schumpeter, a high level of revenue extraction is what the term 'tax state' naturally connotes.

Thus translating Kitschelt's legacies-approach into the language of fiscal sociology, we may derive two sets of hypotheses, one concerning cross-sectional developments and one concerning cross-temporal developments. Concerning the former, a high level of taxation is expected to go hand-in-hand with democracy whereas a low level of taxation is expected to go hand in hand with autocracy. Concerning the latter, this particular relationship between rights and revenue should become stronger over time. The post-communist countries started out as autocracies, and it is likely that the fiscal dynamics will kick in with a time lag, i.e., that the political regime form will only conform to the level of taxation over time.

[172] Not much empirical research has, to my knowledge, been carried out on this subject with regard to post-communism. One important exception is Easter (2002), in which he contrasts the fiscal strategies of Russia and Poland in the 1990s.

Let us look at some numbers to test these claims statistically. I have obtained a set of data measuring taxation as a proportion of GDP from the World Bank's *World Development Indicators 2004*.[173] This time around, I will zoom in on the years 1996 and 2000. The only reason why I solely focus on two out of the fours years analysed in chapters 3 to 5 (i.e., the reason why I exclude 1992 and 2004) is that I do not possess adequate data on revenue-extraction for other years. I do, however, have relatively adequate fiscal data for 1996 and 2000. The qualifier 'relatively' should be taken at face value. First, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan are simply missing from the set. Second, some of the time-series for the remaining countries are incomplete, which means that I have had to rely on the numbers for adjacent years (see appendix 1 for these qualifications as well as for the employed figures on tax-intake). That said, the numbers give us a general description of the fiscal patterns of post-communism – which should suffice for the present, general purposes.

In terms of abbreviations I name the fiscal variables 'Tax1996' and 'Tax2000', respectively, and the 'democratic' counterparts 'FH1996' and 'FH2000'. Notice that I deliberately do not observe 'priority' as both variables are measured at the same point in time. This is, to reiterate, an exercise in descriptive, not causal inference. When we relate these two pairs of variables to each other, using linear regressions, the following statistical result emerges.

Table 1: The correlations for Tax1996 and FH1996

	Freedom House ratings, 1996		
	Pearson's R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
Tax revenue (% of GDP), 1996	.671	.450	.422

[173] I wish to emphasise that the data on tax revenue (% of GDP) is derived from the 2004-version of the *World Development Indicators*. In the 2005-version, the World Bank has changed its methodology with regard to 'governance finance data', including taxation. The main difference between the two methods is that whereas the former is cash-based, the latter is based on accounting. Furthermore, social security taxes are considered tax revenue in the 2004-version whereas they are treated separately as social contributions in the 2005-version. Therefore, the numbers in the 2005-version are different from their 2004-equivalents for most countries; and thus different from the numbers employed in the present analysis.

Table 2: The correlations for Tax2000 and FH2000

	Freedom House ratings, 2000		
	Pearson's R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
Tax revenue (% of GDP), 2000	.756	.572	.550

In both cases, the relationship is statistically significant at the .001-level. But notice, first, the very interesting temporal development: the correlation is much stronger in 2000 than in 1996. Whereas the tax-variable account for under half of the variation on the FH-variable in the former instance, the proportion is up to almost six-tenths of the variation in the latter instance. Simply phrased, the political scores conform better to their fiscal equivalents when moving along the dimension of time. This is also indicated by the fact that the countries change the scores to a somewhat greater extent on the FH-variable over the period than on the Tax-variable. Second, the absolute strength of the correlation is very impressive, particularly in the early 2000s. In conclusion, then, both of the tentative hypotheses are confirmed. In figure 1 and figure 2, this is illustrated in two scatter plots.

Figure 1: A scatter plot of the linear regression of Tax1996 and FH1996

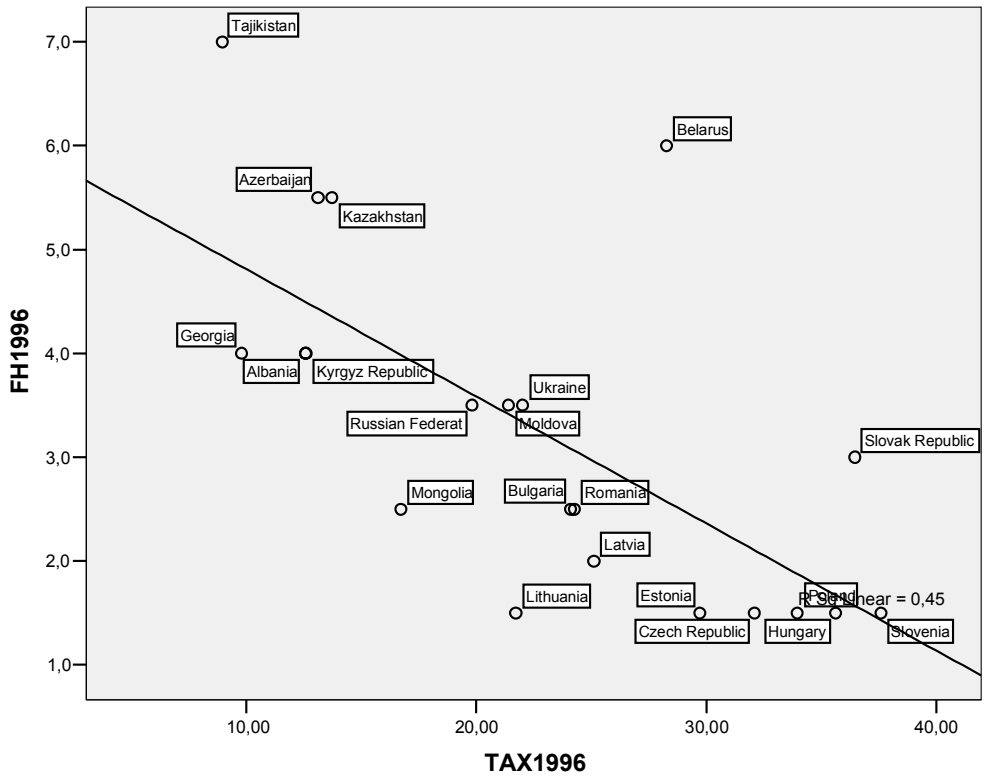
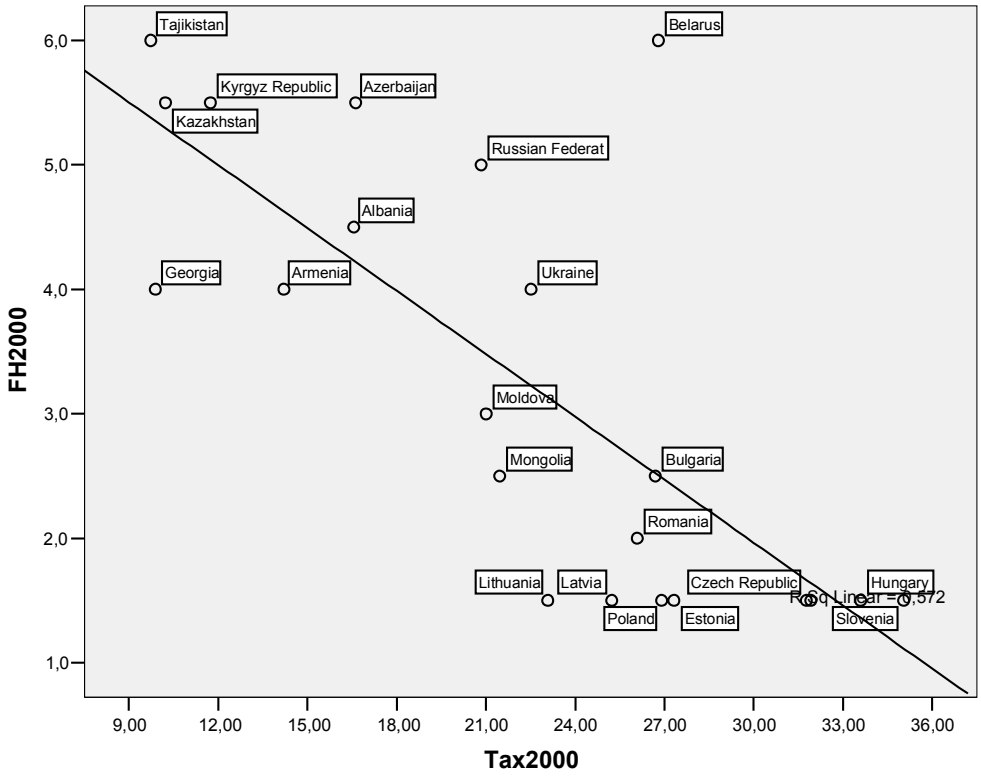


Figure 2: A scatter plot of the linear regression of Tax2000 and FH2000



There is no need to say more about the cross-temporal variation. Let us instead focus on the cross-sectional variation in 2000. One further observation is noteworthy. Belarus is by far the most salient outlier (it is situated almost 3 standard deviations away from the regression line whereas no other case is situated more than 1.5 standard deviations away from the line). If we delete Belarus – and in the next section I will argue that it is theoretically fair to do so – Pearson's R for the 2000-linear regression hits .863 and the adjusted R square reaches .731; a very strong correlation considering the scope of the setting.

If we once again disregard Belarus and relate the data on taxation to the empirical distribution of political regime forms described earlier, three points can be made for 2000:

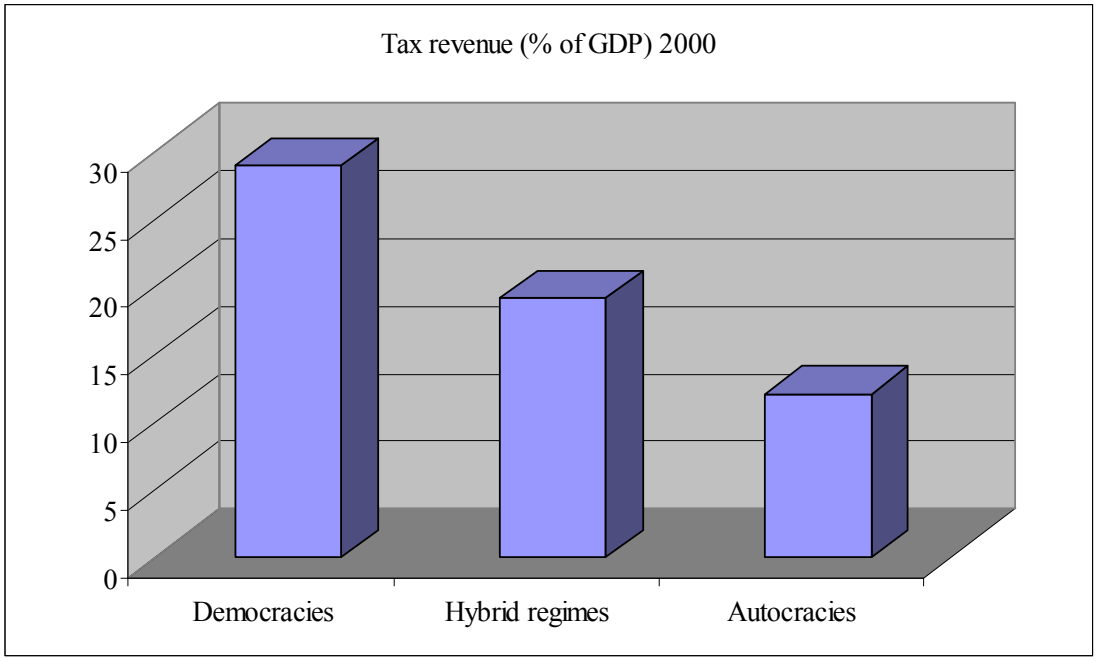
1) The post-communist *democracies* – to be found in Central and Eastern Europe and the Baltic region – are those most capable of taxing their citizens; their tax-intakes oscillate between a low of 23.1 per cent of GDP (Lithuania) and a high of 35.0 per cent of GDP (Slovenia).
2) The post-communist *hybrid regimes* – to be found in the Western part of the former Soviet Union, the Caucasus and South-eastern Europe – have intermediate levels of

tax-intakes, from a low of 9.9 per cent of GDP (Georgia) to a high of 22.5 per cent of GDP (Ukraine).

3) The post-communist *autocracies* – mostly to be found in Central Asia and the Caucasus – are those least capable of taxing their citizens; the tax-intakes oscillate between a low of 9.7 per cent of GDP (Tajikistan) and a high of 16.6 per cent of GDP (Azerbaijan).

Calculating the average tax intake (measured in 2000) for all three respective classes of political regime forms – still disregarding Belarus – the following picture emerges:

Figure 3: Average tax revenue (% of GDP) for democracies, hybrid regimes and autocracies 2000



The conclusion of the statistical exercise is thus very clear-cut. In gist, the more effective a post-communist state is at taxing its citizens, the more likely it is to be a democracy and vice-versa. The two simply go together. This is the case both in the 1996 and in 2000, but the relationship becomes much stronger over time.

4. Toward a post-communist 'law' of taxation and democracy

The statistical relationship depicted in figure 2 is so striking that it makes sense to probe whether it is possible to phrase the link between taxation and democracy as a descriptive 'law' – one valid for the post-communist setting in the early 2000s. Needless to say, a number of countries, and Belarus in particular, seem to render the very notion of a law-like regularity superfluous. However, as Giovanni Sartori has argued, an exception does not mean that a law is out of the question. It merely means that the law must take notice of that exception. This can be done in two ways: '[B]y entering a necessary condition that restricts the applicability of the law (and, if so, the exception no longer subsists), or by incorporating the exception(s) into a reformulation of the law' (1997 : 32).

I will opt for the former strategy here. So, what is the necessary condition that allows the relationship between taxation and democracy to kick in? The relationship between taxation and democracy is underpinned by the tax-payer being a legal entity – one that controls his private economy and therefore can trade rights for revenue with the officialdom. In other words, moving to a lower level of abstraction, the posited link is one between private tax-payers and political and civil rights. In a planned economy, such a link makes little sense. Here, taxation is of a different kind than in a market economy because the citizens do not fund the state as private stakeholders. Rather, the state taxes itself because it controls the economic activity directly. Belarus harbours one of the very few economies within the setting that has never really moved away from central planning. In fact, as we shall see, it is the country with the smallest private sector in the entire post-communist world. For this reason alone, it was theoretically fair to eliminate it from the statistical investigation carried out in the preceding section.

But eliminating one particular case from a statistical investigation is not a very systematic approach. Also, statistical correlations detect probabilities, not regularities, as do 'laws'. Let us therefore try to integrate the point about the citizens as tax-payers into the relationship itself. Simply stated, the negative argument is that the link between taxation and democracy is not valid in a planned economy. The positive argument, the flipside of the coin,[174] is that the link between taxation and democracy is valid in a market economy where the private sector makes up the lion's share of the GDP. The necessary condition is consequently that the country in question is such an economy.

[174] What I have done here is to construe 'planned economy' as a 'contrary' to 'market economy'. On 'contraries', see Sartori (1987).

Now, it can easily be shown that a planned economy effectively rules out democracy (for the classic showpiece, see Hayek, 1994 [1944]). But the opposite is not the case, i.e., the presence of a market economy does not rule out autocracy (Sartori, 1987 makes this point convincingly with regard to fascist Italy and Hitlerite Germany). By implication, it is not tautological to claim that the presence of a market economy is a necessary condition. With this in mind, I state the fiscal law as follows: *Given the presence of a market economy (necessary condition), the presence of a tax state is a sufficient condition for democracy in the post-communist setting by the early 2000s.*

Needless to say, such a statement must be tested. The best way of doing that, I will argue, is to employ typological theory once more. I have already classified the dependent variable of the political regime form using a trichotomy between democracy, hybrid regime and autocracy. I will now go on to classify the possible outcomes on the fiscal variable and the market economy variable, respectively.

With regard to the former variable, the country-figures used in the preceding section for the year of 2000 make for a continuum with a high degree of taxation at one extreme end and a low degree of taxation at the other. How are we ever to introduce a threshold separating classes (i.e., a difference in kind) here? Luckily, the empirical distribution of the post-communist countries presents a useful cut-off point around 20 per cent of GDP. Two groups of countries cluster on each side of this point of separation, and the span of 18 per cent to 21 per cent is a virtual no man's land. This very inductive piece of reasoning leads us to the following operational definition: *A country had a tax state if its total revenues as a proportion of GDP for the year of 2000 exceeded 20 per cent as reported by the World Bank's World Development Indicators 2004*.

With regard to the latter variable, I will measure the attribute of a market economy using figures for private ownership of the economy. This may seem somewhat faulty since a market economy normally connotes more than mere private ownership – the free workings of the price mechanisms is often the attribute emphasised. But recall that the most particular link of the fiscal mechanism is that between private tax-payers and political and civil rights. For this reason, it seems pertinent to focus on the issue of ownership. Or, to phrase it otherwise, private ownership of the economic activity is simply what 'market economy' connotes here.

I have obtained a set of data measuring 'Private sector share of GDP in %, mid-2000' from the EBRD's (2000) *Transition Report 2000* (see the figures in appendix 1). But when is the attribute present and when is it absent? All the countries in question were still engaged in

some form of economic transition by the year 2000. Hence, it makes little sense to place the bar too high. My requirement will simply be that the private sector accounts for more than half of all economic activity. Since the EBRD only reports the proportions for every fifth percentage point, this lead me to the following operational definition: *A country had a market economy if the private sector's share of GDP equalled or exceeded 55 % by mid-2000, as reported by the EBRD's Transition Report 2000.*

Due to the insufficient fiscal data, it was necessary to exclude three (1996) and two (2000) countries, respectively, from the earlier statistical analyses. This time around, I have had to exclude Mongolia as well because it is not included in the EBRD's *Transition Report*. That leaves 21 countries, and the consequent typology with empirical referents is illustrated in figure 4.

Figure 4: The full typology with empirical referents in the early 2000s

	+ Market economy		- Market economy	
	+ Tax state	- Tax state	+ Tax state	- Tax state
+ Democracy	9			
+ Hybrid Regime	3	3	1	
+Autocracy		2	1	2

We immediately see that the stated 'law' is not confirmed. Three countries defy the expectation by being hybrid regimes in spite of having both a market economy and a tax state. Other than that, the countries behave as expected. All nine democracies combine the presence of a market economy with the absence of a tax state whereas the hybrid regimes – the noted deviant cases excepted – and the autocracies combine the absence of both or exhibit a mixed sheet. Let us see who the culprits are, the three countries that defy the fiscal law?

Table 3: The empirical types in the early 2000s

Cases	Tax state	Market economy	Political Regime Form
Czech Republic Estonia Hungary	+	+	Democracy

Latvia Lithuania Poland Romania Slovakia Slovenia			
Bulgaria Russia Ukraine	+	+	Hybrid
Moldova	+	-	Hybrid
Albania Armenia Georgia	-	+	Hybrid
Belarus	+	-	Autocracy
Kazakhstan Kyrgyzstan	-	+	Autocracy
Azerbaijan Tajikistan	-	-	Autocracy

When changing the focus to the actual empirical types, as illustrated in table 3, Bulgaria, Russia and Ukraine turn out to be the deviant cases. This is somewhat comforting news. First, both Russia and Ukraine are situated very close to the threshold marking the presence of a 'tax state' in 2000. Hence, these can be seen as minor transgressions. Second, Bulgaria did indeed move into the class of 'democracy' the very next year, i.e., in 2001. In conclusion, then, we cannot confirm the fiscal law in the bold version it was stated, something that is further underlined by the fact that several countries are missing due to incomplete data – but we can confirm the law in a weaker version.[175] Thus, all democracies have the expected attributes; the same can be said about the autocracies; and the two exceptions are minor ones – which is rather remarkable considering the scope of the setting.

[175] As Sartori (1997 : 32) emphasises, even when the exception is accepted as a genuine one – what I have not done here – it does not in itself obfuscate the notion of 'law'. To quote: 'It is only at this residual point, I submit, that *ad hoc* considerations offer grounds for claiming that a law is enfeebled but not quite falsified by such and such exceptions'.

5. Conclusions

In this chapter, I have attempted to test the very premise of Herbert Kitschelt's 'legacies-approach' to post-communism: that the pre-communist liberal-bureaucratic legacies of state formation have been reproduced under post-communism. I have done so by viewing Kitschelt's twofold legacies-attribute through the prism of fiscal sociology, i.e., by measuring contemporary state capacity and state-society relations as the present ability to extract revenue. The consequent ordering of the empirical referents has then been related to the ordering on the dependent variable. What did the analysis show?

In the post-communist countries, there is a very positive statistical relationship between the level of taxation on the one hand and electoral and civil rights on the other. The variation on the 'fiscal' variable accounts for close to three fifths of the variation on the 'democratic' equivalent in 2000 – and this figure almost reaches four fifths when we eliminate the one salient outlier of Belarus. This relationship indicates that the pre-communist dividing lines of state formation have indeed been carried over into the post-communist era. The theoretical notion of 'legacies' thus allows us to link up with the conclusions of the typological analyses of chapters 3 to 5. In a nutshell, the argument promoted in this chapter is that the structural point of departure can be traced to the fiscal properties.

This is only a tentative conclusion, however, because the data material is very insufficient. Also, one may object that the 'fiscal' variable is in fact too proximate to the explanandum to be very interesting – i.e., that taxation mirrors the democratic achievements as such – the very objection which I have raised against the actor-centred approaches. I do not think that this is the case as the ability to extract revenues is likely to be very path dependent. Also, this is not so much a problem here as I only endeavoured to uncover a descriptive relationship. Having said that, ultimately it would be more interesting to trace the historical origins of the pre-communist dividing lines described by the 'legacies'-approach of Kitschelt. Such an exercise lies beyond the scope of this dissertation; an issue I will come back to it in the ultimate stop on our excursion: the Conclusions.

Appendix 1. The fiscal dataset described

1. The data on political rights and civil liberties come from *Freedom House Ratings*.

2. The data on tax revenue (% of GDP) come from the *World Development Indicators 2004*. Note the following two qualifications due to the incompleteness of the data:

- Where the *World Development Indicators 2004* did not hold data for the years 1996 or 2000 but for an alternative year, this figure was used. In the former instance, such was the case with Georgia (1997 used instead), Kazakhstan (1997 used instead), Russia (1995 used in stead), Tajikistan (1998 used instead) and Ukraine (1999 used instead). In the latter instance, such was the case with Albania (1998 used instead), Armenia (2002 used instead), Azerbaijan (1999 used instead).
- Where the *World Development Indicators 2004* contained no data at all, the country in question was excluded form the regression. In the former instance, such was the case with Armenia, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. In the latter instance, such was the case with Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

3. The data on Private sector share of GDP in % come from the EBRD's *Transition Report 2000*. Notice that no numbers exist for Mongolia.

Table A: The scores on the independent and the dependent variables

Countries	FH-rating 1996	FH-rating 2000	Tax revenue (% of GDP) 1996	Tax revenue (% of GDP) 2000	Private sector share of GDP in %, mid-2000
Albania	4.0	4.5	12.57	16.55	75.0
Armenia	4.5	4.0	-	14.20	60.0
Azerbaijan	5.5	5.5	13.12	16.62	45.0
Belarus	6.0	6.0	28.27	26.79	20.0
Bulgaria	2.5	2.5	24.10	26.69	70.0
Czech Republic	1.5	1.5	32.09	31.77	80.0
Estonia	1.5	1.5	29.72	27.32	75.0
Georgia	4.0	4.0	9.80	9.89	60.0
Hungary	1.5	1.5	35.62	33.59	80.0

Kazakhstan	5.5	5.5	13.73	10.22	60.0
Kyrgyzstan	4.0	5.5	12.59	11.74	60.0
Latvia	2.0	1.5	25.11	25.23	65.0
Lithuania	1.5	1.5	21.72	23.08	70.0
Moldova	3.5	3.0	21.40	21.00	50.0
Mongolia	2.5	2.5	16.72	21.46	-
Poland	1.5	1.5	33.95	26.90	70.0
Romania	2.5	2.0	24.27	26.08	60.0
Russia	3.5	5.0	19.82	20.84	70.0
Slovakia	3.0	1.5	36.47	31.92	75.0
Slovenia	1.5	1.5	37.59	35.04	55.0
Tajikistan	7.0	6.0	8.97	9.73	40.0
Turkmenistan	7.0	7.0	-	-	25.0
Ukraine	3.5	4.0	22.01	22.51	60.0
Uzbekistan	6.5	6.5	-	-	45.0

Conclusions

The breakdown of communism took an entire generation of scholars by surprise. To be sure, many had observed how state socialism had petrified from the 1970s onwards. But, literally speaking, petrifaction (aka. 'freezing' or 'institutionalisation') has a lot of intrinsic stability to it – and few were those who anticipated the grand historical turnaround of 1989-1991.[176] Maybe it was the extreme character, and surprising speed, of these events that paved the way for the subsequent tendency to expect a post-communist future of either doom or deliverance. Thus, one camp – in the introduction I termed them 'the optimists' – saw liberal democracy beckoning beyond the ruins of communism. Conversely, another camp – what I termed 'the pessimists' – foresaw an unenviable future of populism or outright autocracy.

How do these two, competing sets of *ex ante* predictions square with the *ex post* descriptive findings of this dissertation, i.e., with part 1's analysis of the cross-sectional and cross-temporal outcomes on the dependent variable of the political regime form? The answer is simple as neither turn out to be very accurate. Rather than travelling uniformly – or randomly but with a general trend – toward success or failure, the post-communist countries have gone their separate ways on two, significant accounts. First, the setting came to exhibit a trichotomy or tripartition of democracies, hybrid regimes and autocracies as early as the mid-1990s. Since then this division has showed a remarkable stability although some dynamics seem to have re-entered the picture in the 2000s. Second, the tripartition has been subregionally fixed. The Central and Eastern European countries have become democracies, the Central Asian countries (together with Azerbaijan and Belarus) have become autocracies and most of the countries inhabiting the former Soviet heartlands have lingered in a hybrid state.

The descriptive analysis of part I, which elucidated the tripartition, also paved the way for rejecting the empirical value of the distinction between the electoral and the liberal component of democracy, which Larry Diamond and Fareed Zakaria have advocated that scholars keep in mind. When the electoral and liberal components are conceptualised as independent attributes, no significant gap – and definitely not a growing gap – between the

[176] Witness McFaul's (2002 : 212-213) observation that '[a]t the beginning of the 1990s Adam Przeworski pointed to the inability to predict communism's collapse as a 'dismal failure' of political science. Ten years later the paucity of plausible explanations for regime patterns in the postcommunist world stands as an even greater indictment'.

two is in evidence, neither on the global level nor with regard to the post-communist sub-set. Generally speaking, a country that scores high on one attribute also scores high on the other.

This initial exercise in descriptive inference thus laid the problem bare. For how is it possible to explain the identified tripartition between post-communist political regime forms? In particular, how do we account for the systematic cross-spatial combination of intra-subregional similarities and inter-subregional differences? And finally, how may we elucidate the development of the political pathways over time? These questions can only be answered by moving into the realm of causal inference.

The theoretical literature that has evolved since the breakdown of communism contains a great number of potential answers. Concerning the study of post-communism, actor-centred explanations such as those promoted by M. Steven Fish presently dominate the field. In chapter 3, I identified, discussed, operationalised and measured two such actor-centred variables, viz. 'the displacement of communists in the initial elections' and 'strong legislatures in the post-communist setting'. Each of these variables were conceptualised as one-dimensional attributes, i.e., they were dichotomised to capture either the presence or the absence of the matching attribute.

It turned out that the consequent ordering on a compound of attributes could adequately account for the described tripartition on the dependent variable of the political regime form, at least in the period 1996-2004. Differently said, the typological analysis demonstrated that – in the longer run – only the countries with the presence of both of the actor-centred attributes were able to cross the threshold to democracy; with the sole exceptions of Romania and Bulgaria in a large part of the period and Mongolia since 2002. Conversely, in the longer term only the countries that fell short on both attributes have crossed the threshold to autocracy, with the sole exceptions of Kyrgyzstan in the 2000s and Russia in 2004. The two corresponding polar types – what I termed 'actor-induced democracy' and 'actor-induced autocracy', respectively – thus housed no less than fourteen out of 24 countries by 2004, pointing to the existence of virtuous and vicious circles of political change.

So, the actor-centred explanations are the right place to look for those who wish to understand the post-communist political pathways? Unfortunately, it is not as simple as that. The typological analysis of chapter 4 demonstrated that the structural explanations found on the theoretical market place – i.e., identified within Linz and Stepan's encompassing overview of the study of regime change – did the job, too. This time around, I identified, discussed, operationalised and measured four independent variables, namely 'ethno-linguistic homogeneity', 'a beneficial communist legacy', 'prospects for EU-membership after the

breakdown of communism' and 'economic development at the breakdown of communism'. All four were dichotomised depending on the presence or absence of the matching (i.e., underpinning) attribute.

When analysing the political pathways of the period 1992-2004, it quickly became clear that 'ethno-linguistic homogeneity' did not bear upon the outcome (or upon the orderings on the other independent variables for that matter) in any systematic way. Invoking Occam's Razor, it could be eliminated. Yet the three remaining structural variables predicted the political pathways nicely, once again confirming the existence of virtuous and vicious circles. It turned out that only countries exhibiting the presence of all attributes have been able to cross the threshold to democracy, with the sole exceptions of Romania, Bulgaria and Mongolia. Conversely, only countries exhibiting the absence of all attributes have been able to cross the threshold to autocracy, with the sole exception of Russia in 2004. The two corresponding polar types – what I termed 'structural democracy' and 'structural autocracy', respectively – held no less than fifteen out of 24 countries by 2004. The situation was vastly different at the outset of the period, i.e., in 1992,[177] but over the subsequent decade the countries moved into the polar types as expected. In gist, the cross-temporal variation conforms to the structural predictions as does the cross-spatial variation after the initial upheavals ebbed away.

The most salient fact about the post-communist pathways hence seems to be the striking regularities we encounter, both from an actor-centred and a structural point of view. This is relevant when considering the use of typological theory. Needless to say, dichotomising (or trichotomising in the case of the explanandum) variables entails a significant loss of information *vis-à-vis* continuous measures. At first sight, this is a clear limitation of the analyses carried out in this dissertation. But looks may be deceiving. Notice, first, that at least two of the employed variables cannot meaningfully be captured by interval scales. The variable 'the displacement of communists in the initial elections' is inherently dichotomous: due to my ingenious decision to emphasise one sub-attribute only, viz. 'Who won the initial elections', it is heaven or hell, and there is no such place as purgatory here. Kitschelt's ordering of the variable which I have termed 'a beneficial communist legacy' likewise resists interval measures. It is inherently ordinal, with three to four ranked possibilities, depending

[177] Recall that it was possible to initiate the structural analysis earlier than the actor-centred equivalent because of 'priority', i.e., because the structural attributes, reflecting legacies of the past, were measured *at* the breakdown of communism whereas the actor-centred attributes, reflecting institutional choices during the transition, were by necessity measured *after* the breakdown of communism.

on whether the 'colonial periphery' is included. That said, both of these could be construed as dummy variables, as such paving the way for standard OLS-regressions.

This is, however, where the second justification for using typological theory enters the picture, one that is much more critical. As Giovanni Sartori has zealously pointed out, classificatory and typological schemas rest on an assumption of empirical boundedness. That is, we must have a large degree of stability within the ordering on the property spaces for the methods to be viable (or at least illuminating). Otherwise, measuring differences in degree – using continuous measurements – does indeed have a competitive edge over measuring differences in kind (as classifications do).

Yet the flipside of the coin is that striking regularities on the ground warrant the use of typological theory. And, to reiterate, the post-communist setting is indeed characterised by such regularities. In fact, the tripartition that has inspired the title of this thesis extends to the explanans as well as the explanandum, especially when the former is construed as actor-centred and structural 'packages' (i.e., as composite indices). This equals saying that the former communist bloc is, at the end of the day, best described by differences in kind rather than differences in degree. And this is – *a fortiori* – why using the classificatory logic (and, by extension, the typological schemas) is merited, and not just as a heuristic device, when compared to standard statistical procedures.

But, harking back to the theoretical discussion, the fact that the regularities characterise both of the competing sets of independent variables means that we are left with a Gordian knot. For which set of factors should we pin our faith on? How do we cut the knot? The claim staked by this dissertation rests on three premises. First things first, it makes sense to relate the actor-centred and the structural approach to each other to see how they correlate. As demonstrated in chapter 5, the two are strongly interlinked; a full presence of attributes on one 'package' accurately predicts a full presence on the other. Likewise, a full absence of attributes on one 'package' mostly entails a full absence on the other. Combined into a common property space, we thus end up with two polar types – what I termed 'democracy guaranteed' and 'autocracy guaranteed' – under which the lion's share of the empirical referents can be subsumed. These polar types capture the most general dividing lines of post-communism and they underline the value of explaining classes of events rather than differences in degree. Second, and critically, the structural attributes predate the actor-centred attributes temporally. Third, we can establish a theoretical link between the two, one that posits that the actor-centred attributes were (at least to a large extent) shaped by their structural counterparts. To elaborate, the extent to which a post-communist country was

characterised by 'competitive politics' at the time (and during the immediate aftermath) of the transition very much seems to depend upon the structural point of departure.

In gist, the theoretical claim that arises from these premises is that 'increasing returns' characterise not only the relationship *among* the actor-centred and structural variables, respectively, but *between* them as well – what I attempted to illustrate with the metaphors of 'virtuous' and 'vicious' circles. But the circles rotate in a certain direction, in turn reflecting the three premises. In a nutshell, the actor-centred attributes should be construed as intervening links in a causal chain that leads from the structural attributes to the political outcome. Structures do not create democracy (or autocracy for that matter), actors do. But the systematic combination of intra-subregional similarities and inter-subregional differences found within the post-communist setting – on the dependent variable, the actor-centred package and the structural package, respectively – can only be explained with reference to the structural attributes as these are the ulterior attributes of the edifice. As such, the structural factors are the only genuinely independent variables but they kick in via the causal mechanisms that are laid bare by the actor-centred explanations.

Notice how this explanatory edifice represents a criticism of actor-centred approaches such as that of M. Steven Fish (and, albeit more implicitly, the current of Transitology) even though it incorporates and relies on the findings of these approaches. For none of the scholars associated with the bold actor-centred explanations construe their preferred factors as intervening in nature; rather they see them as the interesting independent variables and emphasise the possibility of choice – the high degree of voluntarism – that the actors have. This dissertation has argued otherwise and, on this point, the analysis is very much indebted to Kitschelt's ontological distinction between deep (structural) and shallow (proximate) causes.

Notwithstanding the emphasis on the structural point of departure, the argument promoted is not deterministic. The described patterns only hold on the general level, not on the particular. Most strikingly, the Mongolian pathway completely contradicts the expectations. Mongolia's 'democratic miracle' is just that – a miracle – in so far as it cannot be explained by either the actor-centred approaches or their structural counterparts. Something idiosyncratic has happened in this isolated corner of the setting. And that is not all. To a milder extent, the same can be said of Bulgaria and Romania. Both of these countries have been able to sustain democracy in spite of their lacking a full presence of attributes on both the actor-centred and the structural package. The surprising merits of Bulgaria and Romania can probably – partially at least – be explained by the causal

importance of EU-enlargement. As Milada Anna Vachudova (2005) has convincingly argued, Bulgaria and Romania only really made the democratic turn after the initiation of what she terms the 'active' leverage of the EU, i.e., after the initiation of actual membership negotiations. In the early 1990s, by contrast, the lack of political competition allowed the communist incumbents to pursue an 'illiberal' course of action; something the then 'passive' leverage of the EU could not hinder (see chapter 4 for this distinction). Translated into my explanatory edifice, the structural constraints – in particular those associated with the prior regime form – were unfavourable to political competition and hence to democracy. Only the ascendancy of the EU made it possible to break with these constraints. This goes to show that more attention could be paid to the relative weight of the independent variables over time, at least when descending the ladder of abstraction and scrutinizing particular countries. Finally, a number of other countries do not match the expectations perfectly, albeit the overall fit is rather satisfactory. In short, the dissertation has identified general causes (or probabilistic causation) and equifinality, not deterministic causation.

In chapter 7, I attempted to further investigate the merits of the 'legacies'-approach to post-communism which the structural analysis rests on. Revisiting Kitschelt's analysis of the importance of pre-communist legacies (reproduced during communism), I demonstrated that state-capacity and the matching state-society relations (measured fiscally) and democracy correlate very strongly in the post-communist world of today. Thus, a clear statistical link exists between the extent to which a former communist country is capable of taxing its citizens and the extent to which it is able to sustain democracy. Contrariwise, if such a state does not tax its citizenry, it is very likely to be an autocracy. Also, it turned out that market economy (measured by the presence of a large private sector) was a necessary condition for the fiscal bargain. This lends support to Kitschelt's contention that the twin properties of 'bureaucratic state legacies' and 'the balance of power between communists and their challengers' – dating from the pre-communist era but lingering under communism – influence the political pathways of post-communism. Differently said, on the general level, pre-communist state capacity and state-society relations seems to have survived communism and to have been reproduced after 1989-1991, thus accounting for (or at least correlating with) the political pathways in the latest one-and-a-half decades.

By now, we are dressed to answer the problems raised in the introduction. It turns out that the presence – e.g. in Central and Eastern Europe – of structural factors such as 'a beneficial communist legacy', 'prospects for EU-membership after the breakdown of communism' and 'economic development at the breakdown of communism' accounts for the presence of

democracies in the post-communist setting. These factors kicked in via the mobilisation of the opposition to communism on the eve of the transition of 1989-1991 and the consequent actor-choices concerning the constitutional institutions. Conversely, the absence – e.g. in Central Asia – of these structural factors paved the way for autocracy by virtually ruling out the benign actor-choices just sketched. Finally, the hybrid regimes – geographically situated in-between – owe their existence to a mixed sheet on the structural package, one that also facilitated ambivalence on the actor-centred counterpart.

Notice, however, that the structural point of departure only kicked in with a time lag. As such, while explaining the cross-temporal variation encountered in the setting (i.e., the political pathways leading to the described tripartition), the identified factors are only able to explain the cross-spatial variation after the mid-1990s (i.e., after the tripartition came into its own). In this connection, recall the two competing hypotheses concerning the diachronic relationship between structural constraints and actor-centred choices sketched in the Introduction. My analysis has not confirmed either of these. First, I find no evidence sustaining the propositions that the actors are most important during the transitions but that the structures then kick in. Second, though I find clear evidence supporting the notion that the actor-choices were shaped by the structural constraints, I find no evidence sustaining the proposition that the institutional choices have achieved a life of their own in the longer run (with Mongolia as a possible exception). Rather, the ordering on the dependent variable mirrors the combined orderings on the structural and the actor-centred variables in the longer run.

This brings us to the more general puzzle that was also raised in the introduction, to wit that the tripartition is systematically dispersed geographically, in spite of a common window of opportunity in 1989-1991. According to this dissertation, the combination of intra-subregional political similarities and inter-subregional political differences that has locked in since the early-1990s is a consequence of (and therefore mirrors) the very salient dividing lines separating the post-communist countries on the eve of the transitions, dividing lines created by i) the inheritance from pre-communist regimes (political as well as economically), which survived during communism, and ii) vicinity to Western Europe. Critically, these dividing lines were reproduced by the opposition to communism of the late 1980s and the constitutional engineering of the early 1990s.

The very answer to the puzzle thus arrived at brings us to the first limitation of the present study. At the end of the day, a legacies approach such as that of Kitschelt begs the following question: To which ulterior attributes should we trace the dividing lines of pre-communism?

More generally, how do we explain the origins of the (systematically dispersed) structural diversity characterising post-communism? Kitschelt (1999) emphasise that even 'deeper' factors such as 'religious doctrines' and historical 'zones of administrative-political control' do not make for viable explanations as no causal mechanism explain their cross-temporal impact. That is surely true. But, logically, it must be possible to deliver an explanatory account of diverging patterns of state capacity that allows us to explain Kitschelt's point of departure, i.e., an account that (successfully) treats Kitschelt's explanans as explanandum. Doing so would merely mean extending the causal mechanism further back in time. Notice in this connection that the underpinning mechanism cannot be geographical (viz., proximity to Western Europe) alone as East-Asian countries such as Japan, South Korea and Taiwan have also been able to bring about felicitous patterns of bureaucratisation and state-society relations (see Doner, Ritchie and Slater, 2005). In short, if this dissertation has answered the question, 'Wherefore the post-communist tripartition', then we need to answer the 'Why of the Wherefore' (this formulation paraphrases Kopstein and Reilly, 1999).

This limitation is deeply temporal, or even historical, in that it raises the questions of origins of diversity. The second limitation of the present study is of a very different nature. Recall that the typological analysis left off in 2004 – and the subsequent fiscal analysis only reached the year 2000 due to data limitations. Yet by the mid-2000s, a quite tangible pattern of change seems to have re-entered what I have so far, in the Conclusions, depicted as a 'frozen' situation on the dependent variable. The qualitative analysis of chapter 6 further substantiated that the 'hybrid regime class' is characterised by diversity rather than uniformity, politically speaking. This owes much to the relatively loose (or formless) nature of the actual sub-species of hybrid regimes found in the post-communist setting. As I have empirically demonstrated, the regime form which broke down during – or, better, as a consequence of – the three so-called 'colour revolutions' in Georgia (2003), Ukraine (2004), and Kyrgyzstan (2005) could aptly be termed 'uninstitutionalised semi-authoritarianism'.

As the term indicates, regimes such as these are not stable equilibria but have an intrinsic propensity to create conjunctures. During the consequent 'windows of opportunity' – to a large extent determined by the political cycle of the semi-authoritarian incumbents – actor-choices once again become relevant and this time seem to carry independent explanatory power. The odds are, it should be stressed, staked in the favour of some kind of return to the uninstitutionalised and semi-authoritarian point of departure predicted by the structural constraints. However, the occurrences in Ukraine do in fact point to a possible, though not guaranteed, escape route from the sphere of hybrid regimes (and, by extension, a possible

entry into the class of democracy). At the same time, the 'revolutions' have also spurred neighbouring semi-authoritarian rulers to tighten the reins by seeking to institutionalise their hold on power, e.g. by creating a viable party-of-power. This, too, supports the notion that the actors do have a significant room to manoeuvre within (and maybe even beyond) that delimited by the structural constraints.

Let me briefly relate this to the classificatory logic employed in this dissertation. In general, the 'colour revolutions', which can basically be construed as 'oustings of semi-authoritarian leaders(/leaderships)', have created new differences in degree within the class of hybrid regimes. Yet both Russia and Ukraine – moving in completely opposite directions – points to differences in kind beckoning on the dependent variable, Russia by possibly becoming entrenched in the class of autocracy, Ukraine by possibly moving into the class of democracy. As such, the analysis of chapter 6 has revealed a significant second set of limitations to the present study – methodologically as well as theoretically.

First, I have not been able to expound differences in degree within the classes of democracy, hybrid regime, and autocracy. This has not been a major problem due to the general aim of the dissertation and due to the fact that both the democracies (in Central and Eastern Europe) and the autocracies (in Central Asia) were, to reiterate and elaborate a point made above, heavily 'overdetermined'. With respect to the orderings on the independent variables, everything has favoured the former cluster whereas nothing has favoured the latter. Consequently, they inhabit polar types within which the differences in degree are negligible – at least when viewed from the higher ground.

Not so with the hybrid regimes. In the typological analyses I did venture into the issue of the differences in degree that exist within this class, albeit admittedly in a rather tentative manner. My finding was that the relatively high (or low) presence of actor-centred and structural attributes within the combinations that I termed a 'mixed sheet' did in fact seem to correlate with the Freedom House scores. Thus, the hybrid regimes with more attributes present were closer to the threshold to democracy than the hybrid regimes with fewer attributes present. But this only brings us so far. Generally speaking, the analysis of this dissertation has been unable to account for the lively activity taking place within this class. The very fact that the countries belonging here have a mixed score on the actor-centred and structural 'packages' does to some extent explain what I termed the scope condition in chapter 6: the lack of institutionalisation and the concomitantly fluid nature of very many of these regimes – or, at least, of a certain sub-species found here. But this only entails a

prediction of future change, not an understanding of the direction or the timing of such change.

To grasp such dynamics, two further steps are necessary. First, on the theoretical front, an understanding of the interplay between actors and structures, and the matching process of diachronic social learning, is required. I tried my hand at this in chapter 6 but only got so far. Second, a methodological appreciation of the more particular, i.e., context-specific, causal mechanisms is needed. In short, then, the work laid out in this dissertation could be followed up by what may be termed an historical institutional – and small-N – analysis of the current patterns of change afflicting the hybrid regimes, including meticulous process-tracing.

Reflecting on these limitations, one could accuse the present study for being caught up in the kind of 'paradigmatic thinking' that Albert O. Hirschman (1970) famously warned about.[178] However, and this is important, the somewhat crude contrasting of actor-centred and structural explanations is very much a consequence of the chosen level of abstraction. When seeking to explain the cross-spatial political variation of no less than 24 countries over one-and-a-half decades, general categories and general contrasts of explanatory factors are necessary. The gist of the matter is that we can in fact navigate between different paradigms – as long as the test employed is an empirical one. This point should not be disguised by the (obviously true but also unhelpful) objection that the intricacies of particular cases are not easily unfolded when attacking the reality on the ground in this manner.

[178] This should not be confused with the physical, paradigmatic sciences. Hirschman's point is solely that strong and prespecified paradigms, which only allow confirmation or disconfirmation, make up a straightjacket by hindering more open-ended ruminations about the lessons to be drawn from the cases under study.

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Abstract

When communism broke down in 1989-1991, many scholars foresaw a 'catholic' future of either doom or deliverance. However, reality knocked at an early stage. By the mid-1990s, the former bloc had been divided into three different political phenomena: democracy (in Central and Eastern Europe), hybrid regime (in the former Soviet heartlands) and autocracy (in Central Asia). How do we explain the advent of this post-communist tripartition?

Presently, actor-centred approaches emphasising political mobilisation against communism and constitutional engineering dominate the field. When ordering the post-communist countries on these attributes, we can in fact elucidate the ordering on the variable of the political regime form. But we should not get carried away by the empirical success of these approaches. For this is where geography enters the picture. The tripartition is characterised by, indeed it mirrors, the combination of intra-subregional similarities and inter-subregional differences; and this observation challenges the very premise of the actor-centred approaches, to wit that the room for choice has been quite wide. A structural corrective is therefore appropriate. When ordering the post-communist countries on structural attributes such as character of the prior regime form, the prospects of EU-membership and economic development the conclusion is unmistakable: the structural approaches do the job, too. Equally interesting, construed as 'packages' (or composite indices), the actor-centred and the structural variables turn out to co-vary overwhelmingly.

Where does this leave us? In answering that question, temporal concerns take centre-stage. In brief, the structural attributes all predate their actor-centred equivalents. Furthermore, it is possible to establish a convincing theoretical link between the two 'packages', one positing that the structural constraints shaped the pattern of 'open' (or 'closed') politics at the time of the transitional upheavals. The consequent causal chain leads from the structural point of departure via the actor-choices of the early 1990s to the present political outcomes. The theoretical logic underpinning this edifice is one of 'increasing returns', and it underscores the most salient empirical fact of post-communism: that the dividing lines between democracies, hybrid regimes and autocracies are if not set in stone then at least very clear-cut. By implication, the setting is best described by differences in kind, not differences in degree; which means that classificatory and typological mappings are appropriate when seeking to navigate the post-communist waters – both with regard to the explanandum and the explanans.